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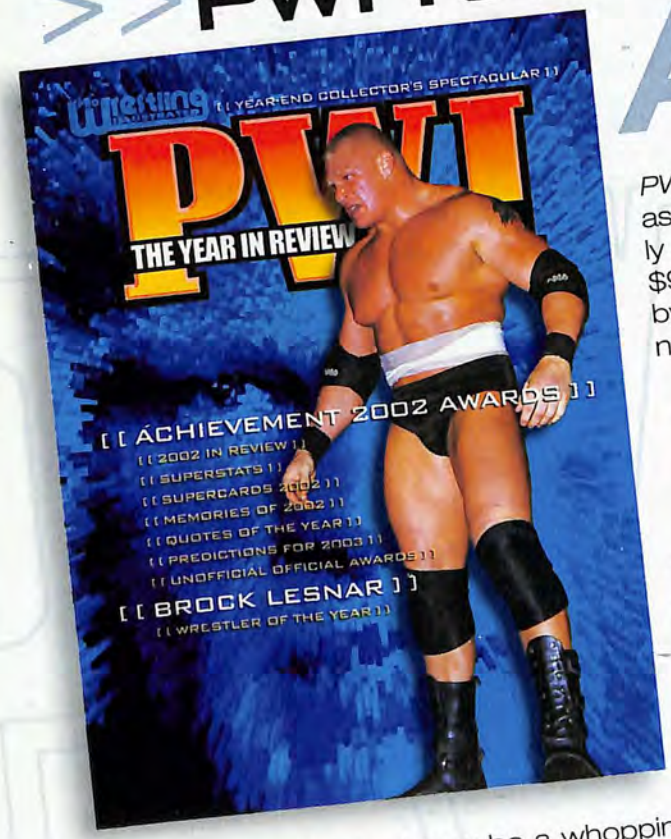
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from the desk of...

IT'S VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE to quantify the success of an athlete in a sport that doesn't have statistics. Pro wrestling has no batting average leaders, quarterback ratings, free throw percentages, or plus/minus numbers. The only numbers that really matter to a wrestler are the percentage of wins vs. losses and the amount of digits to the left side of the decimal points on his paycheck.

Yet, if one were to examine the history of *PWI's* Achievement Awards, it would not be too much of a stretch to say that in 2003, Kurt Angle had the greatest year any wrestler ever had since the annual fan poll began in 1972.

Prior to this year, the most Achievement Awards any wrestler won was three: Ric Flair (1987, 1989), Bret Hart (1997), Steve Austin (1998), and Angle himself (2000). This year, Angle shattered that mark, winning in five of the nine categories in which he was eligible. That alone is a remarkable accomplishment, but when one considers the fact that he also captured three runner-up spots, it boggles the mind of even a jaded editor whose mind isn't boggled by much anymore.

Barry Bonds, Dan Marino, Wayne Gretzky, Wilt Chamberlain—their numbers are in the record books for all to see. Not to take anything away from these men, but not one of them had his greatest season during a year in which he performed with a career-threatening injury or after radical surgery. None of them had what was arguably the best day of his career 24 hours after a sibling's life was cut short by heart disease. Angle's athletic talents and communication skills are plain for all to see, but superlatives haven't been invented yet to describe the depths of this man's character.

Does he deserve to be mentioned among the Bonds, Marinos, Gretzkys, and Chamberlains of the world? Let me answer that with another question: Who among those four would have been a Hall of Fame lock after having performed for just four years?

My fear is that the question is not completely hypothetical. Angle's retirement could indeed come at any time. The spinal surgery that allowed him to wrestle after only two months of recuperation does not come with an extended warranty. No one knows for sure how long Dr. Jho's patchwork will hold up. And no one knows how Angle will hold up if he has to leave a second sport to which he had dedicated his heart and soul.

Never has a man who has achieved greatness in amateur wrestling come to the professional ranks with the same passion to succeed as Angle. In terms of goals, there is nothing new for him to aspire to. But traditional goals are not what drive this man. Sure, he cherishes world titles and number-one rankings in the "*PWI* 500" and Achievement Awards, but what makes Kurt Angle Kurt Angle is the unrelenting desire to excel every single time his name is announced in that ring.

Knowing him, the fact that there are people out there who recognize that and are willing to fill out a ballot to proclaim it justifies everything he went through in 2003. Congratulations, Kurt, on the best year ever.

Stu Saks
Publisher

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Marion, OH 43306-8121
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Pro Wrestling Illustrated (ISSN: 1043-7576), Vol. 25, No. 3, April 2004, is published 12 times a year, including three special issues, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: Pro Wrestling Illustrated, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121. Single copy price $5.95 ($8.95 in Canada, £3.95 in U.K.). Subscription price $83.40 in the U.S. ($122.40 in Canada and remaining countries). Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage.

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FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES: (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable Distribution Services Inc., 641 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022. International distribution by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010. U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.
Printed in U.S.A.

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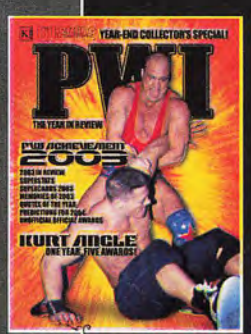

COVER PHOTOS:
Kurt Angle-John Cena by Mark W. Hill

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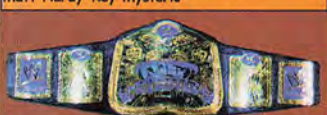

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before the bell

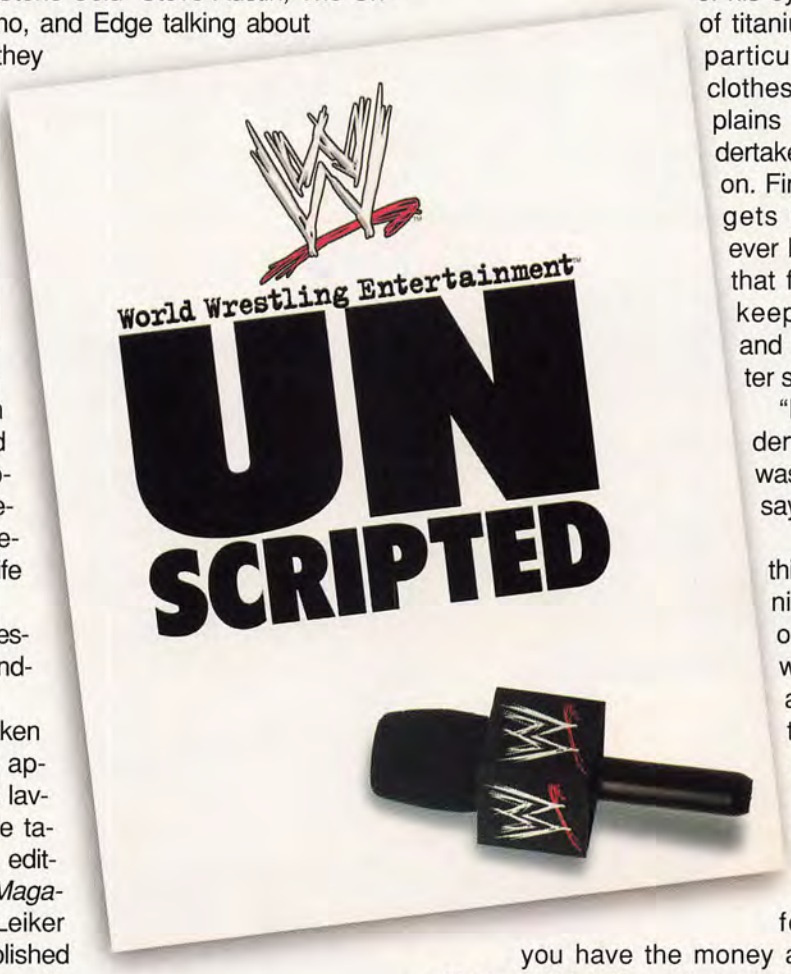
Compiled by Will Welsh

No Script Needed

WWE is known for producing emotional, thought-provoking video montages. The most well-known and heralded of these montages are the set of "Desire" videos, which have been on regular rotation for years and featured stars such as "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin, The Undertaker, Chris Jericho, and Edge talking about the many sacrifices they had to make over the course of their careers. The videos were so well-produced that in only a matter of minutes, they could change the perception of what wrestling is. For just a few moments in between matches, they ripped aside wrestling's protective curtain and revealed the people behind the larger-than-life characters.

For professional wrestling, they were groundbreaking.

Now, WWE has taken another stab at this approach, this time in a lavishly illustrated coffee table book, *Unscripted,* edited by former *WCW Magazine* publisher Ken Leiker and Mark Vancil. Published by Simon and Schuster, *Unscripted* vibrantly depicts life as a WWE superstar through the use of wrestlers' personal stories and recollections and some of the most revealing photographs WWE has ever allowed to be published. Thanks to unprecedented access to all of WWE's stars, including all four members of the McMahon family, *Unscripted* humanizes figures who are all too often thought of and viewed as fictional characters.



The 240-page coffee table book is divided into four different sections—"Me," "Body," "Life," and "Home"—and each of the sections shows different parts of the wrestlers' personalities. For instance, in "Me," The Undertaker details what made him leave college for wrestling—despite being only 10 credits shy of a coveted bachelor's degree. In "Body," 'Taker explains how one of his eye sockets is made out of titanium mesh (thanks to a particularly stiff King Mabel clothesline). In "Life," he explains why he thinks his Undertaker character first caught on. Finally, in "Home," 'Taker gets more revealing than ever before when he admits that for a while he couldn't keep his true personality and his Undertaker character separated.

"I was always The Undertaker; Mark [Callaway] was never around," 'Taker says plainly and honestly.

It's revelations like this—along with the stunning photography, much of which was captured while the wrestlers were at home on personal time—that make *Unscripted* a book that all WWE fans will immediately fall in love with. At $40, the price might be a bit steep for some fans, but if you have the money and are willing to part with it, we think it's well worth the investment. We give it five suplexes out of five.

Talkin' Trash

Here's a list of the top 10 wrestling-related things you've been talking about lately, and our gut reaction to each.

10. Former WCW World champion Lex Luger, who has stayed out of the public eye since the death of Miss Elizabeth and his arrest on drug possession charges, makes his NWA-TNA debut. We've heard of people calling in favors before, but this was a bit ridiculous.

9. WWE announces it will not be renewing the contract of Goldust. *Hmmmmmm,* we sense trouble for Booker T. Who is Book going to turn to now to help him get over ... the new-and-improved Lance Storm?

8. Ernest "The Cat" Miller makes the transition from WWE announcer to WWE wrestler. Okay, so maybe you aren't talking about this, but we like "The Cat" as a wrestler, so we thought that we'd give him a little plug. Sue us.

7. NWA-TNA continues to push an angle with Hulk Hogan even though Hogan had yet to appear on a single TNA pay-per-view as of press time. Instead, what we've been treated to is a storyline centering around "Mouth Of The South" Jimmy Hart, one of Hogan's pals. Oh joy!

6. WWE releases *The Ultimate Ric Flair Collection* on DVD. How many years do we have to wait until WWE releases *The Ultimate Big Bossman Collection* on DVD? Please, WWE, don't make us wait for all of Bossman's great matches as NWO member Ray Traylor too long!

5. Randy Orton gives the RKO to Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban at Survivor Series. How many NBA players do you think would have paid top dollar to take Orton's place in that segment? Fifty? One hundred?

4. Matt Hardy jumps from Smackdown to Raw, then dumps Lita on live TV. Call us crazy, but there's no reason Lita should have looked so surprised by Hardy's actions on the night he returned to Raw. If she was so in love with the guy, shouldn't she have known that he had been acting like Smackdown's number-one jackass?

3. John Cena shuns the dark side and becomes a fan favorite. Come on, you knew that this was going to happen sooner or later. The guy was the most popular wrestler on either of WWE's rosters. We have to admit that we've been cheering him for a while.

2. Raw champion Bill Goldberg defeats Triple-H to retain his title. Anyone think "The Game" would lose to "Da Man" twice in a row on PPV? Don't lie now!

1. Team Austin loses to Team Bischoff at Survivor Series, forcing "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin to forfeit his position as Raw co-general manager and leave WWE. Who would have thought that Eric Bischoff would become such a survivor while on Vince McMahon's payroll?

The Internet Insider

The following news items were culled from various wrestling-related Web sites—or were they? See if you can pick out the two items that were actually reported on the Internet (which don't necessarily mean that they are true) and the two that we blatantly made up. The answers appear at the end of the column on page 11.

1. Mike Tyson is getting desperate for a payday. A spokesman for the former heavyweight champion recently placed a call to Vince McMahon, asking whether WWE would be interested in working with Tyson again. (Tyson worked with WWE in 1998.) When McMahon said no, the man pressed further, offering Tyson's services at a discount. When McMahon said no again, he asked whether Tyson could do something with the XFL. McMahon told the guy that the XFL had folded a couple of years ago, then hung up on him.

2. In *People's* "Sexiest Man Alive" special issue, The Rock was left off the top 10 list but did make the list of "Metrosexiness." The articles states, "Lock up the eye cream! A new breed of guys explain how they aren't ashamed to unleash their feminine side." The Rock was listed under the facial treatments section. He was quoted as saying, "I exfoliate. It's very important to use some good product on your face."

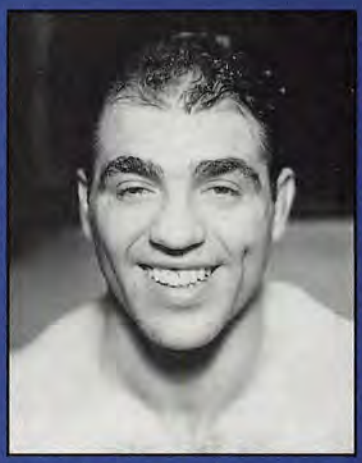
3. The University of Miami Hurricanes football team, struggling at the end of the college football season, placed a call to WWE asking whether The Hurricane would be willing to serve as a mascot for their November 29 game against nationally ranked Pittsburgh. The WWE office had to turn

the request down because Hurricane was scheduled to appear at a Raw house show in San Francisco, California, that day.

4. The Stephanie McMahon-Triple-H wedding in Sleepy Hollow, New York, in October turned out to be a surprisingly classy, understated affair, with one exception. WWE agent Michael Hayes, known for being a big-time party guy in the 1980s while he was a member of The Freebirds, got a little rowdy at the reception. He even took a microphone and started belting out a version of "Jailhouse Rock" before Linda McMahon got up, thanked Hayes for his enthusiasm, and politely told him to knock it off.

This Month in Wrestling History: April

April 3, 1908: Frank Gotch beats George Hackenschmidt at Chicago's Dexter Park Pavilion to win the World heavyweight title in a match that was three years in the making. The match is highly controversial, with Hackenschmidt claiming Gotch doused himself in oil or other substances to make him impossible to grasp. In addition, all newspaper reports show Gotch refusing to lock up and liberally using fouls and roughhouse tactics against the champion. After the ref turns a deaf ear to his appeals, Hackenschmidt finally quits the match after two hours and three minutes. The referee rules Hackenschmidt has forfeited and awards the title to Gotch. (What are the odds that the referee's last name was Hebner?)



April 3, 1929: Joe Savoldi (pictured) is secretly married to Audrey Koehler, age 19, in South Bend, Indiana. Savoldi never lives with her, but is forced to withdraw from Notre Dame (and football stardom) on November 17, 1930. A month later, she sues for divorce, charging desertion. (We don't know what this has to do with wrestling history other than the fact that Savoldi is a former world champion, but it makes for quite an interesting story, huh?)

April 13, 1934: Daisy Florence Savoldi, second wife of wrestler Joe Savoldi, wins a divorce in Los Angeles when she testifies the only time she knew her husband's whereabouts was when papers chronicled his progress from city to city; they were married August 20, 1931, separated October 1932. She is granted $25 a week for two years as settlement. (Up next in "This Month In Savoldi Family History ...")

April 17, 1935: The Masked Marvel, a.k.a. Jim Maloney, unmasks in order to wed Virginia Campell in Walla Walla, Washington. (Gosh, she must have felt so special. Not every masked wrestler will unmask on his wedding day.)

April 25, 2000: AT&T pitchman David Arquette dials up the center to win the WCW World title in a tag team match in which he teams with Dallas Page to face Jeff Jarrett and Eric Bischoff. *Thunder,* which had reached a 3.0 rating at one point during one portion of the program, drops to 2.3 during the overrun featuring Arquette's title victory. Arquette's win eventually comes to symbolize the failure of Bischoff and Vince Russo's joint attempt to revitalize WCW. (Well, at least we can be thankful that Carrot Top hadn't yet started dialing down the middle.)

We Heard That!

"I've been real critical (of WWE's creative process), as everyone knows. I'm a real fan of the older style of wrestling and the older type of storylines. I grew up in Houston on wrestling—Power Pro Wrestling and Mid-South. The basic stuff was guys going for title belts. I know business has evolved and changed into what it is today, and I'm accepting of that, but I think you can cut out a little of the sophomoric humor and be straightforward. I think you can be funny in an unintended way. When Ric Flair was NWA champion, when Hulk Hogan was hot here, when 'Stone-Cold' was hot here, you didn't see a whole lot of laughing or giggling on the promos. It wasn't people getting laughs; it was serious business. Now, I've done comedy stuff in the past, but that's not what I'm talking about. There was a serious vein and the title was important and it was the focus."

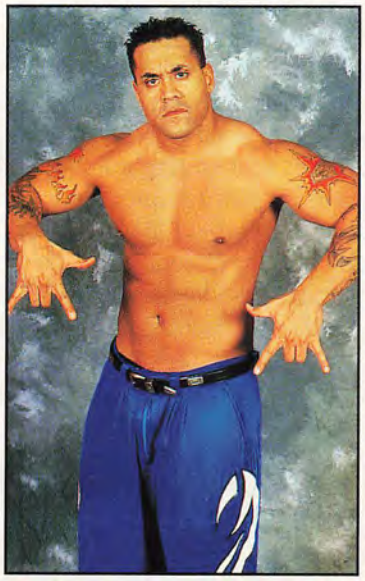
—Steve Austin, discussing his issues with the WWE creative process, in an interview with the *No Holds Barred* radio show

"I think that people are entertained by what I do. I still don't know how they feel about John Cena personally. I just think that the stuff I bring to the program is funny and makes them laugh. I hope that translates into them liking me, because it is a good feeling. At Survivor Series, it was really a good feeling to have everybody up and ready to go. But I'm not certain yet if it's because of what I say, or because of who I am."

—John Cena, discussing his newfound popularity, in an interview with WWE.com

"If you look back at all the great gimmicks, the only two gimmicks that ever truly main evented and worked just as straight-up gimmicks were The Undertaker originally and the Big Bossman."

—Raven, discussing personalities vs. gimmicks, in an interview with the *Pro Wrestling Torch*



"I've tried to (shake comparisons to The Rock). Everywhere I go, in the middle of a match, people start chanting, 'Rocky' or 'You're not The Rock' or 'Rocky sucks.' I can't help it. I've tried growing my hair out and it doesn't work. I've worn long, baggy pants and that doesn't work. Everything The Rock does in the ring, I stay away from and don't do. I've kind of given up. I want to be the first Sonny Siaki and have my own character."

—Sonny Siaki, discussing his frustration of looking so similar to The Rock, in an interview with wrestlingobserver.com

caption me!

Think you're a better writer than the editors at *PWI?* Here's your chance to prove it, punk! This photo of Ric Flair taken with The Rock *long* before he called himself The Rock needs a short, concise, and downright uproarious caption. If you think you're up to the task, e-mail your zany quips to prowrestlingillustrated@yahoo.com, or slap a stamp on an envelope and snail-mail it to "Caption Me!" Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Three issues from now, we'll share with you the best of the bunch—and the funnier the better.

December's Best

"Hey, Mike, I just saved a bunch of money on my car insurance by switching to Geico ..."

—Marrio Gardner, St. Louis, MO

"You do realize you used the word 'obstantatious' in the wrong context, don't you?"

—Chapta11@aol.com

"Now, Mike, that is T-E-R-R-Y B-O-L-L-E-A. Just go over and bite both ears off. And if you want an extra bonus, bite off his nose, too."

—Denise Carter, Stony Plain, Alberta

"Hey, Mike, what do you say after this we grab a bite to eat? I hear Evander Holyfield just opened an all-you-can-eat buffet."

—ny6dx@netscape.net

"If you're gonna fight Scott Steiner, get that metal thing off his head before you go for the ear."

—Robert B. Wetmore IV, Hamden, CT

"By the way, Mike, I just wanted to tell you that I love your frozen chicken breasts. They're delicious."

—Mike Donato, Bohemia, NY

Answers to Internet Insider:

Items 1 and 3 are totally made up.

ringside

With Will Welsh

IF YOU PICKED up a copy of the *State Of The Game* issue of *PWI* (February 2004), you know a good portion of the "State Of NWA-TNA" section was devoted to what we thought was going to be the imminent arrival of **Hulk Hogan**. At the time we completed that report, TNA and Hogan were in negotiations that would have had Hogan appear in a match against **Jeff Jarrett** at the promotion's first-ever three-hour Sunday night pay-per-view. It would have been a blockbuster maneuver that enabled TNA to emerge (if only a little) from the niche market it has established for itself.

Then Hogan wrestled a match against **Masa Chono** in Japan, tweaked his knee, and called out sick when he learned that knee surgery would be necessary. TNA was forced to postpone plans for the three-hour pay-per-view, and instead of having Hogan on its roster, Hogan confidant **Jimmy Hart** began making appearances on the weekly pay-per-views.

Not exactly a promotion's dream come true, huh?

Hart, though, has been making those weekly appearances for one reason and one reason only: to talk smack in Hogan's stead until Hogan is able to start his commitment to the promotion. Hogan and TNA apparently still want to work together, and there are still plans for a three-hour pay-per-view on the table. For weeks, TNA officials were working to finalize a date in February for Bound For Glory. Then word got out in early-December that Hogan's knee was still causing him big problems and that the card would likely be postponed until May or June.

Of course, the three-hour pay-per-view is largely contingent upon Hogan finalizing his agreement to appear on the pay-per-view. Despite all the hype that Hart has given him in recently, he can still back out. And with WrestleMania XX looming on the horizon, **Vince McMahon** might decide he wants Hogan to appear on that extravaganza more than TNA officials want Hogan to appear on their card. It's possible that McMahon will make Hogan a 'Mania offer he can't refuse.

Keep in mind that Hogan believes that WrestleMania is just as much his baby as it is McMahon's, and we can only assume that he'd like to be in Madison Square Garden for the big 20th birthday bash. What he doesn't know right now is whether McMahon really wants him there.

All of this puts TNA in a very precarious position. Every week the promotion allows Hart to come out and act as Hogan's spokesman, it becomes more dependent upon Hogan actually making an appearance for the promotion. Yet every week that goes by in which Hogan doesn't appear, the risk TNA takes in losing his services to

It seems likely we have seen the last of Mr. America, but we haven't seen the last of Hulk Hogan. As more time passes without him making an appearance in Nashville, however, TNA officials have to wonder if he really has shut the door on WWE.

We lost yet another star much too soon this fall when Michael Lockwood—best known as Crash Holly—was found dead in the Florida home of his pal Steven Richards. He was just 32.

WWE seems to increase.

As for Hogan, if he doesn't appear for TNA at some point, he'll have at least committed a remarkable breach of etiquette. He has given TNA officials enough confidence that they're using his name on their broadcasts. At this point, he owes them an appearance or two, because if he doesn't show, TNA will have devoted time, money, and other resources into hyping their eventual relationship, only to see it fall apart in a very public way—and that could hurt the company immeasurably.

Michael Lockwood, who was most famous for his run as 21-time WWE hardcore champion **Crash Holly**, was found dead in the home of **Steven Richards** on November 6. No official cause of death had been determined as of press time, as toxicology tests had not been completed, but the police report noted that he was found partially clothed with a pool of vomit around his face.

Lockwood, who had most recently appeared with NWA-TNA as **Mad Mikey**, was a ground-based technical wrestler whose in-ring skills went largely unappreciated because of his short stature and goofy, hilarious hillbilly character. At 5'9" and a scant 204 pounds (and those figures might be giving him a couple of inches and more than a couple of pounds), it was amazing that he even reached WWE at all—let alone lasted with the promotion several years—without having a daredevil background. But that's exactly what Lockwood did, which was a testament to his talent and hard work.

Another reason why Lockwood lasted as long as he did was he always made his segments entertaining. It didn't matter if he was evading fellow competitors who were trying to take his hardcore title during the days of the 24/7 rule or on the receiving end of a little tough love from "cousin" **Hardcore Holly**. Lockwood had the special power of making people laugh. He provided WWE with some refreshing comedy relief during one of its boom periods, and not once during his WWE tenure did his character become tiresome.

Michael Lockwood was only 32 years old. He leaves behind a daughter, **Patty**.

Unfortunately, I have three other deaths to report. **Moondog Spot**—real name **Larry Booker**—died at a show in Memphis' famed Mid-South Coliseum on November 29. He was competing in a four-team concession stand brawl when he suddenly just sat down in the corner and stopped moving. Medics rushed to the ring to work on him and tried to revive him, but he was pronounced dead when he arrived at a local hospital. Booker was briefly a co-holder of the WWF tag team title back in 1981 and enjoyed much of his success in Tennessee. He was 61.

American wrestler **Jerry Tuite**, 36, was found dead in a Narita, Japan, hotel on December 6. Tuite had just completed a tour of All-Japan Pro Wrestling where he wrestled as **Gigantes**. Tuite had also wrestled in WCW as **The Wall** and **Sgt. A-Wall**, in NWA-TNA as **Malice**, and was briefly signed to a WWE developmental deal last year. Preliminary reports claim that he died of acute cardiac arrest. Tuite's body was scheduled to be cremated and sent back to his home state of New Jersey.

Finally, **Dick Hutton**, who beat the legendary **Lou Thesz** for the NWA World title in 1957 and reigned for nearly 14 months as champion, died at the age of 80 in November.

NWA-TNA made the most controversial decision of its short history when it brought in former WCW World champion **Lex Luger** for a match that saw him team with Jeff Jarrett against **Sting** and **A.J. Styles**. The controversy stemmed from the fact that many

Everyone in power in TNA knew they would be criticized for bringing in Lex Luger for even one appearance, though they insist they did it for the right reasons. Luger wasn't impressive in the ring.

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fans thought that TNA wasn't bringing in Luger because of what he could do in the ring, but because of the buzz his appearance could generate. (Luger hadn't made an appearance for a wrestling promotion since police arrested him on drug possession charges following the death of **Elizabeth Hulette** last spring.)

TNA Entertainment President **Dixie Carter** responded to the criticism in a press release:

"It is rare that TNA ever responds to media, no matter how off it may be from fact. But we strongly believe it is appropriate at this time to address what is being said about Lex Luger appearing on our November 12 pay-per-view telecast. TNA is about opportunity—for wrestlers new and established. For the fans, TNA provides a weekly program that showcases today's hottest talent, introduces the stars of tomorrow, and provides the opportunity to re-experience wrestling icons ... The success of bringing Lex to TNA won't be measured with pay-per-view buys. It will be measured by what a man does with an opportunity given."

As it turned out, Luger didn't do much with the opportunity he was given. While still as muscular as ever, Luger got winded quickly, was only able to attempt the most basic of maneuvers, and only tagged in for short amounts of time. He did manage to get Styles into the torture rack, but Sting came in for the save, allowing Styles to roll up Luger for the pinfall victory.

WWE has signed six new wrestlers to developmental contracts. **Demond Thompson** (who has impressed a lot of people as **Morris** the butler and has already appeared in several skits on WWE TV), **Mark Magnus**, **Chris Cage**, and **John "Tank" Toland**, who had already been wrestling in WWE's developmental territory, Ohio Valley Wrestling, will continue their training there, while **Brent Albright** and **Bobby Lashley** are starting their training with OVW.

Good look to all six wrestlers for landing those coveted WWE deals. This is the first step.

That does it for me this month, fans. Enjoy your wanderings. □

Sometimes toiling in OVW as a pure independent wrestler can pay off in a big way. It did for Chris Cage and several others who were recently inked to WWE developmental deals.

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WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. Airplane spin
2. Arm drag
3. Arm lock
4. Asian spike
5. Atomic drop
6. Bear hug
7. Bite
8. Body slam
9. Body tackle
10. Bulldog
11. Chicken wing
12. Choke slam
13. Claw
14. Clothesline
15. Cross body block
16. Double axehandle
17. Drop kick
18. Eagle split
19. Elbow smash
20. Eye gouge
21. Face rake
22. Fireman's carry ram
23. Flying body press
24. Flying clothesline
25. Flying drop kick
26. Flying elbow drop
27. Flying head butt
28. Flying mare
29. Forearm smash
30. Foreign object
31. Full nelson
32. Giant swing
33. Grapevine
34. Hair pull
35. Hammer lock
36. Head lock
37. Head stomp
38. Hip roll
39. Irish whip
40. Knee drop
41. Leg lock
42. Leg sweep
43. Manager interference
44. Monkey flip
45. Overhead toss
46. Pole ram
47. Reverse chin lock
48. Rolling scissors
49. Rope burn
50. Russian sickle
51. Savate kick
52. Scissors grip
53. Shoulder breaker
54. Slingshot
55. Snap mare
56. Step-over toe hold
57. Suplex
58. Surfboard
59. Turnbuckle smash
60. Wrist lock

SET-UP HOLDS

61. Abdominal stretch
62. Avalanche
63. Backbreaker
64. Backroll press
65. Belly to belly
66. Big splash
67. Boston crab
68. Brain buster
69. Camel clutch
70. Cobra clutch
71. Cradle
72. Crucifix
73. DDT
74. Figure four
75. Flying leg drop
76. Gourd buster
77. Hurricanrana
78. Moonsault
79. Neckbreaker
80. Piledriver
81. Power bomb
82. Power slam
83. Scorpion deathlock
84. Sleeper
85. Slingshot suplex
86. Spine buster
87. Stunner
88. Sunset flip
89. Superplex
90. Texas cloverleaf

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WEAR-DOWN HOLDS: *Choose 10 of the holds at the left numbered 1-60. Only use a hold once.*

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

6 _____ 7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____

SET-UP HOLDS: *Choose 5 of the holds at the left numbered 61-90. Only use a hold once.*

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

FINISHING HOLD: *Create your own custom final maneuver or choose a hold from our list.*

_____

in focus

By Dave Lenker

TOP 10-A-MANIA!

Something told me Triple-H might take a bit of a beating in this, our much-anticipated year-end extravaganza. You nice folks out there just can't lay off "The Game" no matter how hard you try, though I'm not sure you're trying very hard. I wasn't at all shocked to see a lot of you skewering him in the "Unofficial Officials," predictions, and in the zany top 10 lists you sent my way. (Come on, people, there really is a lot of good about Triple-H!) But I showed a little restraint on these two pages. I chose only what I thought was *the* best Triple-H-bashing top 10 for publication. The rest of the lists that made the cut this year cover a lot of different territory. I'm happy to report there was a lot of ridiculousness from which to choose. So let's hear a quick drum roll and get to the best of the best of the best from 2003 ...

TOP 10 WAYS TO PISS OFF TRIPLE-H

10. Tell him what you really think of Stephanie
9. Relieve yourself in his water bottle
8. Ask him why Kevin Nash and Nathan Jones got movie roles before he did
7. Kick him in the groin
6. Ask him how it felt to lose to The Ultimate Warrior in less than two minutes in his WrestleMania debut
5. Have an affair with his sledgehammer
4. Compliment him for helping The Brooklyn Brawler get over
3. Any time you need to talk to Vince McMahon, ask him, "Where's Dad?"
2. Tell him to make sure he's over Chyna
... and the number-one way to piss off Triple-H:
1. Simply ask him, "Are you using backstage politics to get over?"

—Erik Bhatnagar, Troy, AL

TOP 10 THINGS WWE SHOULD GET RID OF (*AND SOON!*)

10. Scott Steiner's voice
9. Chris Benoit's dentist
8. John Cena's collection of Vanilla Ice albums
7. Nidia's chewing gum
6. A-Train's back hair *(please!)*
5. Rico's sideburns
4. Rico's tights
3. Rico
2. The Big Show's Domino's pizza credit card
... and the number-one thing WWE should get rid of (*and soon!*):
1. La Resistance's United States visa

—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

TOP 10 MYSTERIES IN WRESTLING

10. Why does Stacker 2 have the 500-pound Big Show promoting its product?
9. Why does Rey Misterio Jr. wear a mask when we all saw his face in WCW?
8. Why does Chris Jericho still call himself Y2J when the real Y2K passed without incident four years ago?
7. If everyone was clamoring for the return of Goldberg, why was he nearly booed out of the building at Backlash?
6. Would Triple-H still receive main event matches if he was not married to Stephanie McMahon?
5. Would Mick Foley still make guest appearances on *Raw* if he didn't have a book to plug?
4. Isn't Shawn Michaels a little old to be calling himself "The Heartbreak Kid"?
3. How come Kurt Angle's hair hasn't grown back since Edge shaved it off?
2. Why does The Undertaker make his entrance riding a motorcycle when his entrance music begins, "Dead Man walking ..."?
... and the number-one mystery in wrestling:
1. What would you have to do in order for Vince McMahon *not* to take you back?

—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

TOP 10 WAYS WWE COULD BOOST ITS WOMEN'S DIVISION

10. It brought back Hulk Hogan ... isn't Wendi Richter available also?
9. Terri vs. Lilian Garcia—"Hell On A Waterbed"
8. The *Raw* Girls, directed, choreographed and starring Kimberly Page
7. I hear Madusa isn't doing anything
6. Mexico, Japan, the independents ... and that's just where to scout
5. I hear Momoe Nakanishi is free
4. Whatever happened to Midnight?
3. David McClain wants to know if you will buy his old Women of Wres-

Go ahead and try to make "The Game" mad!

tling promotion from him
2. Three words: Ayako, Sonoko, and GAEA
... and the number-one way WWE could boost its women's division:
1. Sign those girls from the Miller Lite catfight commercial!

—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

TOP 10 SIGNS THAT VINCE McMAHON IS RUNNING OUT OF IDEAS

10. He brings back The Godfather, whose "ladies" are now all over the age of 70
9. HLA becomes a weekly segment involving Mae Young and Fabulous Moolah
8. He turns Kane back into the fake Diesel, even though Kevin Nash is still under contract
7. Rikishi runs over anyone with a bald head
6. Rehires Vince Russo, making him lead writer of *Raw*. A week later, Joe Black is the Raw champion
5. Al Wilson comes back from the dead, as a diva brain-eating zombie. He dies soon after getting into the Smackdown divas' locker room
4. Rehires Hulk Hogan, dresses him up in the American flag, and calls him Mr. America
3. Makes Rico become a fashion consultant, as a ripoff version of WCW's old Kwee Wee character
2. Triple-H dresses up like Kane, goes into a funeral home, and has simulated sex with a mannequin named Katie Vick
... and the number-one sign that Vince McMahon is running out of ideas:
1. Numbers two, three, and four have already been done!

—James Bullock, Richmond, VA

TOP 10 MATCHES/STORYLINES IN WHICH THE McMAHONS COULD PLAY MAJOR PARTS

10. A family "Brawl For All." Linda gets the knockout on Vince and finally pays him back
9. An all-McMahon version of *Family Feud*. Linda, Vince, Shane, and Stephanie ask 100 people what they would like to see on WWE TV, and the survey says ... less of all of them!
8. Family secret-on-a-pole match. The family secret of why the McMahon family is so screwed up is placed in an envelope on a pole; the first McMahon to grab the envelope gets the pleasure of embarrassing the family one more time
7. The McMahon family swimsuit competition. Let's not even go there. One image is scary enough—grapefruits in a thong!
6. The McMahon 24/7 match. Oh wait, don't we already get that?
5. Mother and father vs. daughter and son. Why not make it a tag team match?
4. Match made in heaven. The McMahons' final TV appearance!
3. McMahon-a-mania vs. McMahon-a-mania. Like 'Taker vs. 'Taker, this one could have the good Vince vs. the evil Mr. McMahon
2. Loser-leaves-WWE. Yeah, like that will ever happen!
... and the number-one match/storyline in which the McMahons could play major parts:
1. Vince's funeral. Steph and Shane get to feud over which of them was the last one to kiss Daddy's ass—and that person gets control of the company!

—Chris Maki, cmsmacks@mail.com

"The Animal" has a lotta hair to lose!

TOP 10 LEAST POPULAR PAY-PER-VIEWS

10. Partially Loaded
9. No Way Out of paying $34.95 for this!
8. Arbor Day
7. Summer-The-Guy-You-Like-Probably-Won't-Win-Slam
6. Larry King of the Ring
5. Back Trash
4. Forgive and Forget
3. Royal "The Greatest And Most Important PPV Event Of All-Time ... Until Next Month" Rumble
2. WWE Divas Undressed ... Featuring Mae Young
... and the number-one least popular pay-per-view:
1. DQ Mania!

—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

TOP 10 FEUDS IN WWE WE COULD SEE IF MORE SUPERSTARS FROM THE PAST RETURNED

10. Jimmy Snuka vs. Rob Van Dam. The feud over who has the better splash from the top rope
9. Nikolai Volkoff and The Iron Sheik vs. La Resistance. Who hates America more?
8. Rick Martel vs. Rico. Can you say fashion show match?
7. Ron Killings vs. John Cena. The freestyle rap battle
6. King Kong Bundy vs. The Big Show. A true test of strength ... for the ring!
5. Chyna vs. Jazz. Wrestling's most powerful women in the ring
4. Hillbilly Jim vs. Jamie Noble. Redneck triathlon II!
3. Los Boricuas vs. Los Guerreros. Talk about some Latino heat!
2. Ted DiBiase vs. Vince McMahon. Wrestling two most evil and rich men fighting
... and the number-one feud in WWE if more superstars from the past return:
1. George "The Animal" Steele vs. A-Train. The *ultimate* hair vs. hair match!

—Bobby Pitts, San Jose, CA□

off the top rope

By Brandi Mankiewicz

If you wish to contribute to Brandi's mailbag, send your letters to:
TOP ROPE Box 1148 Ft. Washington, PA 19034
Or send e-mail to: **offthetoprope@yahoo.com**

(Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Brandi Mankiewicz herself. They do not necessarily reflect the editorial views of this magazine.)

IN THE IMMORTAL words of Lili Von Shtupp, "I'm tired." Watching ***Blazing Saddles*** *last night with friends reminded me of what is good in this world. It's always good to enlighten a hillbilly with his first viewing of that classic movie. It's always good to know that I still have all the dialogue committed to memory. It makes all of the wrestling knowledge in my brain somehow not seem useless.*

What does ***Blazing Saddles*** *have to do with wrestling? Plenty. Anyone who has been locked in a car speeding down I-95 wedged between six wrestlers for any amount of time can easily relate to the campfire scene. The characters are blatantly stereotypical, yet have a depth that is only truly appreciated after viewing the movie a few hundred times. In each scene, there is something askew that might not garner a laugh the first time it's viewed. It's this multi-leveled, unpretentious comedy that makes this movie one of the best ever produced.*

WWE Creative could stand to schedule a screening of this movie. Hell, they need to hire Mel Brooks as a consultant. Brooks could teach everyone a thing or three about character development and storylines. I would relinquish my championship crown to him for a day if he'd lend a helping hand on either Monday or Thursday nights.

Dear Queen,

As I sit here looking over the new edition of *PWI*, I am astounded that somehow a Hall of Fame that is supposed to be the most legit and respected in professional wrestling has once again shunned Bob Backlund. Your Hall of Fame is just a sham. It's a joke. It does not deserve the title of most respected Hall of Fame for anything. Not having Bob Backlund in the Hall just because voters hold a grudge and have a beef with him is not a legit reason to keep him out after he was champ for nearly six years. Especially when you let a glorified mid-carder like Chris Benoit into the Hall. And the writers love to throw the asterisk on and say that he was a one-time world heavyweight champ. But they leave off the fact that it was during the demise of WCW.

People like Josh Mason can complain all they want about Bob Backlund not being in "our" Hall of Fame. Truth is, he doesn't deserve to be.

That was the exact reason that you gave for not letting Jeff Jarrett into the Hall. Not letting Backlund into the Hall of Fame due to a writers' grudge would be the equivalent of not letting Barry Bonds into the Hall of Fame for the same reason. And you cannot say that it is due to lack of a career after winning the championship, because "Superstar" Billy Graham was a first balloter and his only claim to fame was his crazy ass flippin' and trippin' on Vinnie Mac on *Donahue* and holding the title for almost a year. Oh, and taking a ton of steroids and almost killing himself in the process.

With amplitudes of disdain for disgruntled HOF voters.

JOSH MASON
masonslaw@yahoo.com

Josh,

First off, you're an idiot. *The Wrestling Observer* Hall of Fame is not based solely upon the views of *PWI*. We vote yearly, along with dozens of other industry insiders, on the various candidates. It doesn't mean that we're absolutely responsible for the outcome; we're just a small part of the process, and we acknowledge this as the sport's true Hall of Fame. If your theory was valid, then I'd have a legitimate reason to kick the ass of every moron who voted for President Bush. We have our views on who should be in there and have written about it in our sister publications, like the January 2004 issue of *The Wrestler*, for example. That doesn't mean our favorites are destined for induction; it just means we like them.

On to the Benoit vs. Jarrett HOF battle. Benoit got in because he's an innovator of the modern bad ass technical wrestler. He's revered on at least two continents as both Chris Benoit and Wild Pegasus. He was part of what made ECW revolutionary. Jarrett, on the other hand, never strayed

far from Tennessee, and when he did, he didn't do anything earth-shattering. He is almost as vanilla cardboard as Bob Backlund, who doesn't deserve to be in the HOF, either.

As for your heinous assault on Superstar Graham, he was the first major heel to have a lengthy WWF title reign and make big business for Vince. His character was blatantly ripped off by Hulk Hogan, right down to the feather boas. Sure, he used steroids, but that was before they were banned. If anything, he's now the poster child for the anti-steroid cause.

Hi Brandi,

I'm not looking to be published so I'm not going to call you "my queen," nor will I type erratically or illiterately. I recently re-read several "Off The Top Rope" articles and realized that we have a common favorite: Gino Hernandez. The "Handsome Half-Breed" changed me from liking fan favorites to liking rulebreakers. The Dynamic Duo, Gino and Chris Adams, were more responsible than The Fabulous Freebirds for creating the legend of the Von Erichs. Those two guys did not give a rat's ass what they did or who they did it to. If Gino Hernandez was in his prime today, with all of the cable channels, PPVs, and Internet, he'd definitely be the best. I'm not trying to sound like a boot-licker; I just always dug Gino.

Anyway, I recently decided to watch TNA, and I'm becoming a fan. If you get another "Brandi, I miss the ECW!" letter, suggest TNA. Those guys go all-out. Thank you for your time, and if you slam me, I won't write a stalker letter. However, I might ask if I can touch your feet. Just kidding.

SHAWN HEBERT
sphebert@hotmail.com

Hi Shawn,

Yay for me! Gino fans are finally coming out of the woodwork! It's about time more fans come clean about Gino's greatness. I think I shall vote for him when the next HOF ballots are delivered. If that first reader's theory is correct, my one vote for Gino will get him inducted—and it'll be before Backlund!

I think one of my readers from England is trying to tell me that he is astounded that Test is still on the WWE roster. I'm equally astounded by the same thing.

Letter of the month (taken verbatim from the actual letter to share my torture with you all):

dear brandi

i have been a fan of wrestling since the summer of 1999 and i have been reading PWI since then. i have wanted to write for years and know have got the guts to.I have one question for you to answer.why is test still in the WWE?

didn't he defect to the alliance in 2001 and didn't the alliance lose to team wwf.i now that test won the immunity battle royal to guaranty him 1 year job security but it has been 2 years since survivor series 2001 and test is still working for wwe why? test the character has lost focus since the alliance lost and the raw writers are not doing him any favours putting him in stupid storylines that don't make any sence. it was not like this 5 years ago when test was battling the likes of shane mc mahon at summerslam 1999 what has ruined test the character is T&A do you remember that god arful tag team in 2000 i think that the wwe should be firing test A.S.A.P

brian howard
manchester, england

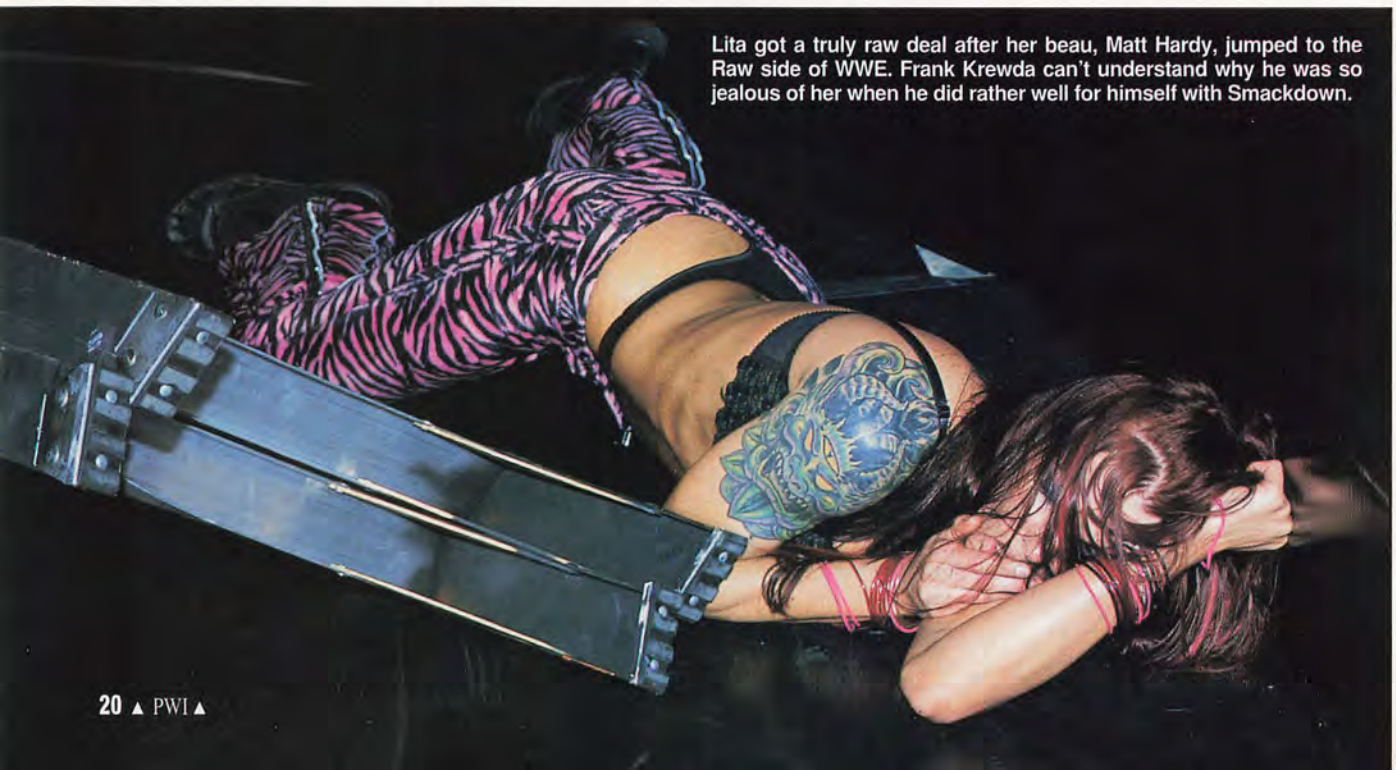
Fans,

Even an idiot with the reading comprehension skills of a three-year-old and even more rudimentary writing skills can figure out that Test is a waste of money, TV time, and oxygen. □

krew-cuts

By Frank Krewda

General observations. Ever hear the adage "Don't pull a gun unless you're going to use it"? Somebody should tell Triple-H to leave his sledgehammer backstage at Raw cards unless he intends to swing it correctly. This ghastly weapon is supposed to enhance Triple-H's villainous rep. However, poking opponents with the handle, rather than smashing them with the maul, actually makes him look compassionate. We all know by now that Triple-H will probably never strike with the "business end," so why introduce the sledgehammer at all? ... Another wrestling prop that's in danger of becoming meaningless: the steel cage. Once reserved for only the most intense feuds, WWE actually had Lita and Victoria open a late-November episode of *Raw* in a cage match. While the ladies division has obviously improved, Lita vs. Victoria hardly warranted a steel cage, even if it was "Raw Roulette" night in Salt Lake City. Imagine how disappointed the fans in attendance felt when they learned the cage hanging above the ring was there for Lita and Victoria, and not for the main event ... Speaking of Lita, something about Matt Hardy's reaction to her success doesn't ring true. While Lita was out injured and pushing her book, Hardy had a nice gig over at Smackdown, where he developed the obnoxious but popular Mattitude gimmick. He's got nothing to be jealous of. Then again, love can make you do strange things—like slam a steel cage door on your ex-girlfriend's head ... Hardy's tantrum reminded me of something I saw on *Raw* a month earlier, when Steve Austin announced that Triple-H would have to face Bill Goldberg for the Raw title. The members of Evolution stomped around the ring in protest, and Ric Flair's face turned 15 shades of purple as his exclaimed that Austin couldn't make the match. Apparently, logic took a smoke break from this segment. Flair's injured protege is handed a title match, and he's angry? Wonder how Rob Van Dam or Lance Storm would've reacted to "bad news" like that ... Lots of scuttlebutt over indy wrestler Teddy Hart's (nephew of Bret and Owen) postmatch antics at a recent Ring of Honor show. Basically, Hart upstaged a number of his fellow ROH performers (and put them at risk for injury) by scaling a steel cage after the match (which his team lost) and performing a series of unexpected high spots. Hart's co-workers were understandably upset, and Hart was duly kicked out of the promotion. But here's the twist: The fans went bonkers for Hart's one-man show, which raises an interesting question: Is it more important for a small promotion to establish a code among its performers or put backsides in the



Lita got a truly raw deal after her beau, Matt Hardy, jumped to the Raw side of WWE. Frank Krewda can't understand why he was so jealous of her when he did rather well for himself with Smackdown.

seats. If this were WWE, I'd agree Hart should be gone. However, for a small promotion like ROH that's looking to grow, purging the roster of talented yet temperamental wrestlers is a much trickier issue ... Back to WWE for a sec: How long will it take Rosey to become a full-fledged superhero? He's been in training for months now, with no graduation day in sight. Maybe the Rosey/Hurricane partnership would strengthen a bit if they gave Rosey the uniform already ... I get a kick out of Terri Runnels. On one recent *Raw*—"Raw Roulette" night—she became outraged when she discovered a midget looking up her skirt. Weeks earlier, however, she went out and wrestled in a match that was clearly designed to show as much of her assets to the world as possible ... Love that morality. It's almost as convincing as the Chris Jericho-Trish Stratus, Christian-Lita sapfest. Trish sniffling back tears, clutching a Canada jersey she made herself while Jericho reveals his sinister intentions to Christian behind her back? Is this WWE or junior high? Remember, Trish once crawled around the ring on her hands and knees, barking like a dog, just to please Vince McMahon. A babe in the woods? Sorry, not buying it ... I also have difficulty buying into Rico as a blue-chip WWE performer. Week after week, Jim Ross cites Rico's "real-life" toughness: former cop, martial arts master, bodyguard for G. Gordon Liddy (who probably doesn't need one even at his current age), etc. Yet the ridiculous gimmick he has to endure, not to mention the string of losses, contradicts everything coming out of J.R.'s mouth. ... How much does mainstream media coverage really mean to wrestling? You decide. After ESPN included a clip of Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban getting laid out by Randy Orton at Survivor Series in its "Plays Of The Week" segment, the talking head quipped, "Wonder what Junkyard Dog thinks" ... Aside from the fact that NWA-TNA still can't decide if it's a mat-based or microphone-based company, and the lukewarm response to Sting and Lex Luger, one of the reasons the promotion can't get ahead may have to do with its fascination with WWE. Want proof? Check out some of TNA's merchandise. Any time a promotion markets a T-shirt that comments on the competition (as in one that rips "Vince" in a very profane way, though TNA will tell you it means Vince Russo and not McMahon), you can tell its energies are not being used productively. ECW fell prey to the same mentality (remember Joey Styles forever ripping WCW and its performers?). A silly obsession with the competition isn't what sunk ECW, and it will not sink NWA-TNA. But when you must deride others, rather than promote your own product, odds are there's little to promote. That said, NWA-TNA did something recently to catch my attention: The company put on a good old-fashioned squash match! That's right, Chris Sabin pinned David Young in two seconds (thanks to a fast count) after a sunset flip. In terms of reality, one-punch kayos happen in boxing and mixed martial arts every now and then. But featuring a two-second wrestling match, then asking fans to shell out 10 bucks a week doesn't make a whole lot of sense. □

Why did Terri get so upset when a midget was caught taking a peek up her skirt? As a WWE diva, Krewda notes, she should be used to being exploited in unusual ways.

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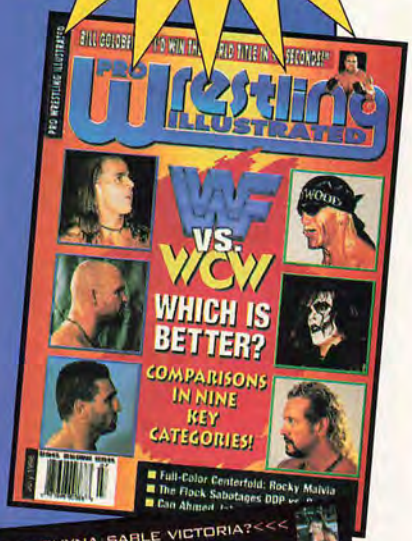

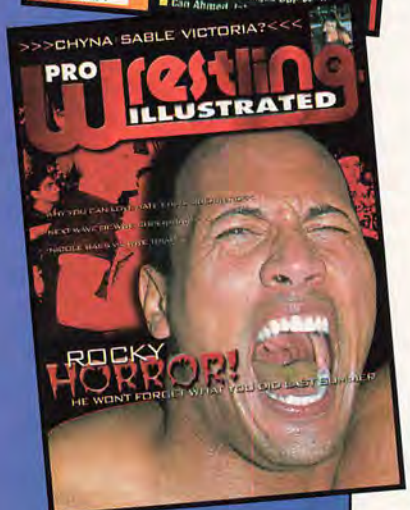

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July 1990: The Maturing Of Lex Luger: The "Total Package" Becomes The People's Choice. Centerfold: Rick Martel. Plus: Skyscrapers, Bobby Heenan, Mr. Saito, referees.

September 1990: The Hulkster's Wrath: 7,000 Miles To Violent Redemption. Centerfold: The Steiners. Plus: Jeff Jarrett, Sting, Destruction Crew, Four Horsemen, Curt Hennig.

October 1990: Sting's Painful Lesson: You'll Have No Friends At The Top. Centerfold: Brutus Beefcake. Plus: Orndorff-Blanchard, Tugboat, Teddy Long, Ultimate Warrior, Road Warriors.

April 1991: Sgt. Slaughter Guilty Of Treason! Centerfold: Tom Zenk. Plus: Sting, Magnum T.A., Jesse Ventura, Lawler-Gilbert, Hogan & Warrior.

June 1991: Hulk Hogan: America's Hero. Centerfold: Hacksaw Duggan. Plus: Cactus Jack, Ric Flair, Nasty Boys, Steiners, Simmons-Reed.

July 1991: The War Is Over! Hulk Hogan Liberates The WWF Belt From Sgt. Slaughter! Centerfold: Brian Pillman. Plus: Horsemen, Lex Luger, Eric Embry, Demolition.

August 1991 (Special Issue): Supercards '91. Centerfold: Hulk Hogan. Plus: WrestleMania VII, WCW-New Japan, Ultimate Warrior, Owen Hart, Koloff-Luger.

October 1991: Sid Justice: The Second Coming Of Hulk Hogan. Centerfold: Lex Luger. Plus: Hogan-Slaughter, Terrence Taylor, Barry Windham, Williams-Bigelow.

November 1991: Your Wedding Gift For Savage & Elizabeth: Help Lift The "Macho Man's" Suspension! Centerfold: Bobby Eaton. Plus: Tito Santana, Bushwhackers, Jushin Liger, Brian Pillman.

February 1992: Has Hulk Hogan Had Enough? Centerfold: 1992 calendar. Plus: Sting, Justice-Roberts, hot prospects, Eddie Gilbert.

May 1992: Revitalized In Tokyo: Hulk Hogan Is Super-Psyched For WrestleMania VII! Centerfold: Rick Rude. Plus: Sting & Muta-Steiners, Jarrett & Fuller, Lightning Kid, Randy Savage, intimidation.

June 1992: Exclusive *PWI* Interview: Roddy Piper Speaks Out! Centerfold: Dustin Rhodes. Plus: Dangerously-Sting, Abdullah-Cactus, Sid Justice, Randy Savage.

July 1992: The Best Of The Best—The Masters Of Their Craft. Centerfold: Randy Savage. Plus: Liger-Pillman, Jim Neidhart, U.S.-Japan, Ric Flair.

September 1992: Savage vs. Sting: Why It Isn't That Unlikely. Centerfold: Nikita Koloff. Plus: Steiners, Barry Windham, Sid Justice, Hodge & Weston, Shawn Michaels.

October 1992: The Hatred Still Runs Deep: Ultimate Warrior vs. Randy Savage—They'll Settle Up At SummerSlam! Centerfold: Cactus Jack. Plus: Steve Williams, Tom Zenk, WWF title controversy, fire match, Eric Embry.

February 1993: No One Can Cut Down Razor Ramon. Centerfold: Curt Hennig. Plus: Jake Roberts, Pillman-Dustin, Ric Flair-Road Warriors, Rick Rude, Snuka-Muraco.

May 1993: WrestleMania Without Hulk Hogan? Centerfold: The Undertaker. Plus: Ron Simmons, Cactus Jack, Madusa-Sherri, WCW-New Japan, Ultimate Warrior.

April 1996: WCW World Title Turmoil. Centerfold: The Kid. Plus: Hulk Hogan, Ahmed Johnson, Bob Armstrong, Michaels-Bret, Public Enemy.

May 1996: Un-Natural! The WWF Has Finally Gone Too Far! Centerfold: Public Enemy. Plus: Jeff Jarrett, Dreamer-Raven, Dan Severn, Ric Flair, Giant.

October 1996: Peaking Too Soon: Will The Giant Be Ruined By His Own Success? Centerfold: Goldust. Plus: Big Van Vader, Ric Flair, Bulldog, Lex Luger.

February 1997: Mr. Perfect: "Shawn Michaels Stole My Life." Centerfold: "Psycho" Sid. Plus: Kroffat & Furnas, Vince McMahon, Randy Savage, New Razor & New Diesel.

July 1997: Steve Austin: Stone-Cold And Uncensored! Centerfold: "Diamond" Dallas Page. Plus: Rocky Maivia, The Road Warriors, The Eliminators, Nick Patrick.

December 1997: Ken Shamrock's Deadly Climb To The Top. Centerfold: Randy Savage. Plus: Eric Bischoff, Eddy Guerrero, Perry Saturn, WWF light heavyweights.

February 1998: Sting vs. Hogan—The Match Of The Century! Centerfold: Hogan vs. Sting fight poster. Plus: 16-page Starrcade preview, Perry Saturn, Dude Love.

May 1998: Starrcade Scandal! We Hate To Say It ... But Give The Belt Back To Hogan. Centerfold: Ric Flair. Plus: Mero & Sable, Taz, Taka Michinoku.

June 1998 (Special Issue): The 1998 *PWI* Poll. Centerfold: Steve Austin. Plus: Sabu, Lex Luger, Sting, Rocky Maivia, Bill Goldberg.

July 1998: WWF vs. WCW: Which Is Better? Centerfold: Rocky Maivia. Plus: Benoit, Bill Goldberg, Ahmed Johnson.

October 1998: Bret Screws Bret, Part II. Centerfold: Hunter Hearst Helmsley. Plus: Jim Ross, Marcus Bagwell, WWF controversy, FBI.

November 1998: Vince Mc(Mad)Man! He Crossed The Bottom Line ... Now He'll Pay! Centerfold: Kevin Nash. Plus: Sting, Bret Hart, Taz-Douglas, New Age Outlaws.

Holiday 1998: *PWI* 500. Eighth Annual Special.

March 1999: 1998—The Year In Wrestling. 1998 In Review, Achievement '98 awards, Unofficial/Official awards, predictions for 1999.

April 1999: The Crock! The Title Change That Screwed The World! Centerfold: Chris Jericho. Plus: Bill Goldberg, Tommy Dreamer, Booker T, more Unofficial/Officials.

May 1999: Who Holds The Key To WrestleMania XV? Centerfold: Konnan. Plus: Mark Henry, Sting-Nash, Bill Alfonso, Brian Hildebrand.

June 1999: The *PWI* Poll. Plus: Mankind, Flair & Turner, VMac, Steiners, New Japan-UFO.

July 1999: Warning! This Team Will Self-Destruct In 15 Seconds! Centerfold: X-Pac. Plus: New Jack-Dudleys, Jesse James, Venis & Godfather, Sting-Bischoff-Flair.

August 1999: Supercards '99: WWF WrestleMania, WCW Uncensored, ECW Living Dangerously. Plus: Super 8, Bam Bam Bigelow, Jerry Lawler, tag team wrestling.

September 1999: Why Stone-Cold Might Get Out While He's Still On Top! Centerfold: Sting. Plus: Kidman & Misterio, The Rock, Bret Hart, Taz-Sabu.
October 1999: Why The World Must Fear Scott Steiner, By Buff Bagwell. Centerfold: Mankind. Plus: Kane & X-Pac, The Godfather, Perry Saturn, 20th anniversary readers' poll.
November 1999: The Women Of The WWF: There's More To Their Power Than Their Looks. Centerfold: Owen Hart. Plus: Rey Misterio Jr., Roddy Piper, Steiners, Steve Austin.
December 1999: Steve Austin: "CEO This! I'm The Damn Champ!" Centerfold: Rey Misterio Jr. Plus: Randy Savage, Jimmy Hart, WCW youth, Billy Gunn.
Holiday 1999: *PWI* 500. Ninth Annual Special.
January 2000: The Millennium Man Mouths Off! An Unforgettable Hour With Chris Jericho! Centerfold: Taz. Plus: Chris Benoit, Sid-Goldberg, Triple-H.
February 2000: The Master Manipulator! How Stone-Cold Controls The WWF. Centerfold: Kane. Plus: Paul Heyman, Hogan-Bret-Sting-Luger.
March 2000: 1999—The Year In Wrestling. 1999 In Review, Achievement'99 awards, Unofficial/Official awards, predictions for 2000.
April 2000: Stone-Cold vs. The Rock: Let's Settle It At WrestleMania! Centerfold: Chris Benoit. Plus: Dallas Page, Goldberg-Vicious, more Unofficial awards.
May 2000: The Y2K *PWI* Poll. Plus: Mitsuharu Misawa, Triple-H, Bret Hart, Hollys, Chyna & Aysa, ECW returnees.
June 2000: Just Wondering, Steph ... Is Triple-H Worth Your Billion-Dollar Inheritance? Centerfold: The Rock. Plus: Heyman-Van Dam, Vader, NWO.
July 2000: Call It A Wrap, Jack! You've Done Your Share ... Go Home! Centerfold: Sid Vicious. Plus: Dusty Rhodes, Disco Inferno, DDP, Dudleys-Hardys.
August 2000: Supercards 2000: WWF WrestleMania, WCW Uncensored, ECW Living Dangerously. Plus: Rob Van Dam, greatest supercards, Super 8.
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October 2000: Scott Steiner: The Superstar The WWF Let Slip Away. Centerfold: Rikishi. Plus: Shawn Michaels, Austin-Rock, Rhino-RVD.
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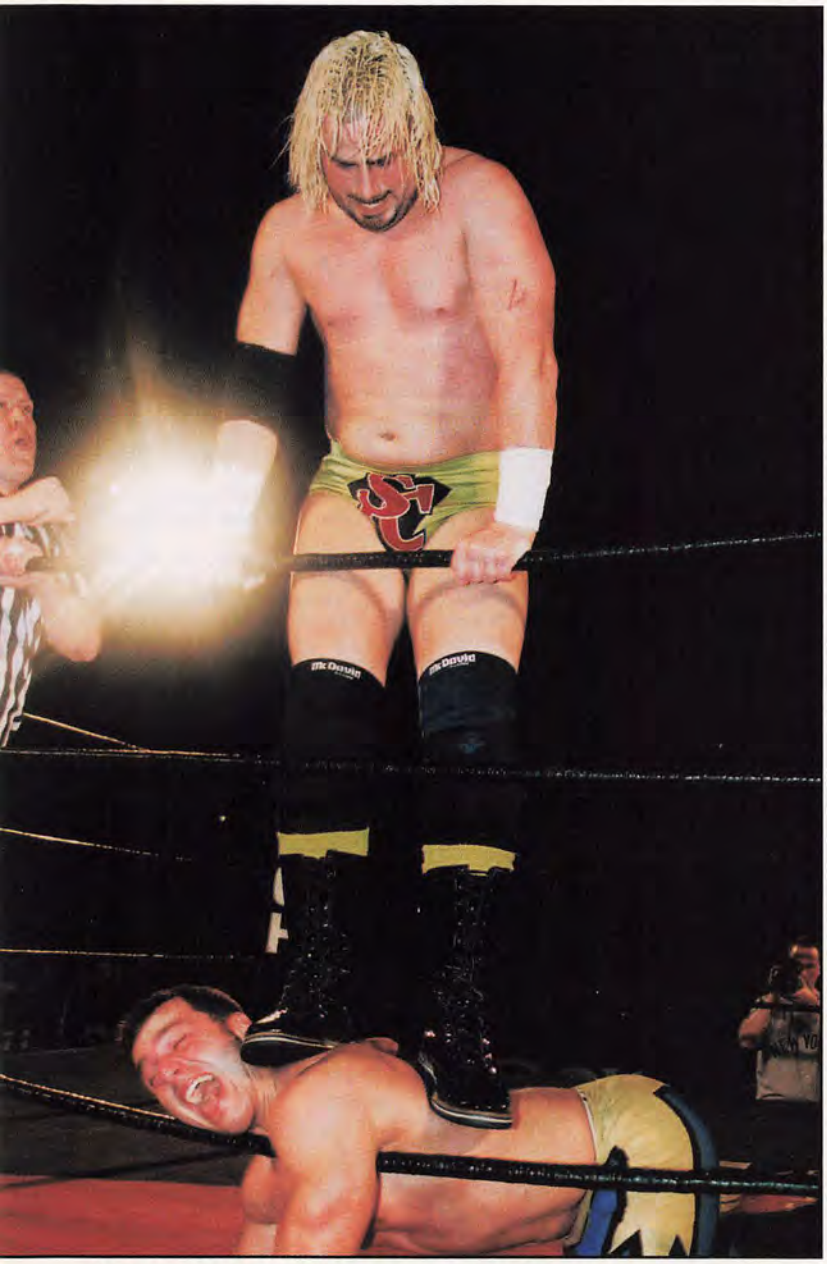
6594/12-03

independent roundup

By Liz Hunter

JAPANESE WRESTLING PROMOTION Zero-One has announced the formation of two separate promotions, Pro Wrestling World-1 and 01USA, with World-1 being an American-based promotion. World-1 has already scheduled several dates in America, and the shows will feature the best of Zero-One, as well as American indy wrestlers. The roster includes Zero-One regulars **Masato Tanaka**, **Steve Corino**, **Yoshihito Sasaki**, and **Jun Kasai**; American independent wrestlers **C.W. Anderson**, **Simon Diamond**, **Christopher Daniels**, **Jerry Lynn**, and **C.M. Punk**; and freelance wrestlers **Jack Victory**, **Josh Daniels**, and **Matt Striker**. The promotion plans to bring the hard-hitting *puroresu* style to a mainstream American audience on a regular basis. It should be interesting to see if it will work here in North America and just how other major independent promotions will react to their newest competition.



Starting in February 2004, American fans can see Zero-One star Steve Corino stand on fellow World-1 competitor Josh Daniels' back to torture him. The half-American, half-Japanese promotion will feature the best of both continents on its shows.

NWA Mid-Atlantic announced plans to regularly tour China starting in late-2003. The exclusive agreement will allow NWA Mid-Atlantic to run up to 40 shows in the communist country in 2004. Scheduled to appear on the inaugural tour are **"Dr. Death" Steve Williams**, **Terry Taylor**, **Mike "Colorado Kid" Rapada**, **Chris Hamrick**, and **Lex Lovett**, among others. The first three events will take place in city of Guangzhou, located at the mouth of the Pearl River in the southern province of Guangdong. One of these events will be shown on state-run television.

Oklahoma independent star **Brent Albright** has signed a WWE developmental deal. Albright is better known as **Vinnie Valentino** and **Slater Vain** on the indy scene. He has wrestled mainly in the Oklahoma area, but has also toured with Pro Wrestling NOAH in Japan, as well as competed in dark matches for WWE.

In a bizarre scene, Professional Championship Wrestling owner **Meredith Kensington** was seemingly electrocuted by **Mike Foxx** just moments after Foxx was informed that his posse would not be allowed at ringside during his upcoming best-of-three-falls match against heavyweight champion **Shadow**. An outraged Foxx threw a pitcher of water at Kensington, who was holding a live microphone, which caused the electrocution. Afterward, the scheduled main event, between **Ahmed Johnson** and **Tim Storm**, was cancelled. Fortunately, Kensington is okay.

Major League Wrestling completely revamped

its company recently after canceling several shows in the Florida market. MLW is scheduled to relaunch its schedule with mostly dates in the Northeast, as well as in Florida. Former WWE announcer **Kevin Kelly** has replaced **Joey Styles** as the voice of MLW ... Look for New York standout **Mike Kruel** to have a breakout year in 2004. He has been quietly building a reputation as one of the best independent wrestlers in the Northeast. Recently, he added another accolade to his resume by defeating Christopher Daniels for the East Coast Wrestling Association heavyweight title, ending the "Fallen Angel's" 11-month title reign ... **Jasmin St. Claire** is slated to appear in two movies, *Communication Breakdown* and *Ride Into Terror*. **The Blue Meanie** will also appear in *Communication Breakdown* ... **Damien Blade** won Midwest Powerhouse Wrestling's Tournament of Greed on November 8. He defeated **Agent U** in the finals.

Say goodbye to Oklahoma, Brent Albright! Albright signed a developmental deal with WWE and is on his way to Ohio Valley Wrestling.

Quick title changes: Exodus Wrestling Alliance, Kings Mountain, NC, November 28: **Storm** defeated **Bambi** to win the ladies title ... **Rick Morton** defeated **George South Sr.** to win the heavyweight title ... ***Mainstream Wrestling Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, November 27:*** **Calum Macbeth** beat **Paco Loco** to become the Atlantic Canadian champion ... **Lincoln Steen** defeated **Tony Armstrong** by submission to win the heavyweight championship in a hardcore streetfight ... ***New Empire Wrestling, High Point, NC, November 27:*** **Ravishing Ritchie** defeated regional champion **Ric Converse** to win the title ... **Doink the Clown** defeated National champion **J-Money** to win the title ... ***Southwest Premier Wrestling, Tyler, TX, November 26:*** **Hallowmass** won a three-way tag team match against **Trailer Park Trash** and **The New Legacy** to win the NWA Southwest tag team title ... ***Maniac Wrestling Alliance, Anahim Lake, BC, November 25:*** **Avalon** pinned **Miss Chevius** to win the vacant ladies title ... ***Central Wrestling Alliance, Georgetown, KY, November 23:*** **Dick Dalton** defeated **J.T. Money** to win the Xtreme title ... ***Christian Wrestling Federation, Crosby, TX, November 23:*** **Wes Word** pinned light heavyweight champion **MACE** to win the title ... ***Christian Wrestling Federation, Crosby, TX, November 22:*** **Scottie Wrenn** pinned heavyweight champion **Larry Green** for the title ... ***Supreme Pro Wrestling, Sacramento, CA, November 22:*** **Adam Thornstowe** defeated **J.D. Bishop** in an impromptu no-disqualification match to win the heavyweight title ... ***ICW Pro Wrestling, Holly Ridge, NC, November 22:*** **Dark Starr** beat heavyweight champion **Duke Richards** to win the title ... ***Independent Wrestling Federation, West Paterson, NJ, November 22:*** **Brandon Young** defeated **Shawn Donavan** to capture the American title ... ***NWA Bluegrass, Salyersville, KY, November 22:*** **The Beautiful People** defeated tag team champions **The Redneck Express** to capture the title ... ***NWA Florida, St. Petersburg, FL, November 22:*** **Steve Madison** pinned NWA Florida champion **Scoot Andrews** to win the title ... ***Steel Rage Pro Wrestling, Tulsa, OK, November 22:*** **Luc LaPoint** beat hardcore champion **Big Daddy Moore** for the title ... **John O'Malley** beat hardcore champion **Luc LaPoint** for the title ... **Ian St. James** and **Renegade** beat **Northern Threat** for the tag team title ... ***Tornado Pro Wrestling, Tulsa, OK, November 22:*** **Butch Dalton** and **Brian Lakewood** beat tag team champions **Rick Styles** and **Karl Davis** for title ... **Pooh Bear the Hardcore Pimp** beat **Shadow of Death I** for the vacant hardcore title ... **Deuce Rodriguez** beat light heavyweight champion **Outcast** for the title ... ***Far North Wrestling, Johnstown, PA, November 16:*** **Phoenix** won a triangle match over **Kevin Grace** and **Joey Knight** to win the vacant cruiserweight title ... ***Real Canadian Wrestling, Barrhead, AB, November 16:*** **Nik Fusion** beat **Pat Myers** to win the lightweight title ... **Steven Hawkes** won a 10-man battle royal to become the first Canadian champion ... ***Southern Championship Wrestling, DeBary, FL, November 15:*** **Axis** and **Python** defeated **Dagon Briggs** and **Leon Scott** to win the tag team title ... ***Real Canadian Wrestling, Westlock, AB, November 15:*** **Pat Myers** won a triangle match against **Nik Fusion** and **Joey Syxx** to win the lightweight title ... **Bi-Polar** beat **Steven Hawkes** to win the hardcore title ... ***Ultimate Championship Wrestling, Cwmbran, Wales, November 8:*** **The Saint** defeated U.S. champion **Tommy Hawk** to win the title... **The Gangster** defeated heavyweight champ **Switchblade** to win the title. □

the international report

By Mike Spillane

IT'S BEEN A long, hard road to the top of New Japan for **Hiroyoshi Tenzan** *and* for his ardent supporters. For years, Tenzan has been on the verge of breaking through as New Japan's next big thing, but everything from backstage politics to injuries have hurt his chances. This summer, though, long-time fans of the charismatic star rejoiced as Tenzan won the annual G1 Climax Tournament for heavyweights, and in the autumn at last realized his potential by defeating **Yoshihiro Takayama** for the IWGP heavyweight belt at Yokohama Arena. Best known for his championship-caliber teams with **Masa Chono** and **Satoshi Kojima** over the years, Tenzan has been lurking beneath the top tier of New Japan stars, while many of his contemporaries surpassed him. Now is Tenzan's chance to shine and lead the company out of its most depressed period for business.

It took a lot longer for it to happen than a lot of people expected, but Hiroyoshi Tenzan (shown against Manabu Nakanishi) is finally the man in New Japan. In just the last few months, he has won the G1 Climax Tournament and upended Yoshihiro Takayama as IWGP heavyweight champ.

While the G1 is the most eagerly anticipated tournament for heavyweights each year, junior heavyweights have had an irregular showcase tournament over the years known as the Super J Cup, an often-imitated event. There have been three previous J Cups: In 1994, it was hosted by New Japan, and won by **Chris "Wild Pegasus" Benoit**. Then, in 1995, **Genichiro Tenryu's** WAR promotion hosted the tournament, and **Jushin Liger** emerged victorious. The event went on hiatus until 2000, when **Great Sasuke's** Michinoku Pro held the J Cup, and Liger again proved to be unbeatable.

Recently, plans for a 2004 J Cup were announced, this one to be held by Osaka Pro, with the involvement of many of the major promotions in Japan. The tournament brackets will have been released by the time you read this, and the participation of many of the world's top junior heavyweights is a given for an event of this magnitude. Curious by its absence, however, is the Toryumon, a promotion made up almost entirely of junior heavyweights; the group has yet to commit to involvement. **Mitsuharu Misawa's** Pro Wrestling NOAH, home to great juniors like **KENTA** and **Naomichi Marufuji**, had also not announced any interest in getting involved as of press time.

Past tournaments have featured a host of the sport's finest athletes, including **Ultimo Dragon**, **Eddie "Black Tiger" Guerrero**, **Taka Michinoku**, **Dean Malenko**, **Funaki**, **Chris Jericho**, **Christopher "Curry Man" Daniels**, **Ricky Marvin**, and **Dos Caras**.

One of the highlights of the 1995 Super J Cup was an exhibition match between two relatively unknown Luchadors. **Psicosis** and **Rey Misterio Jr.** battled it out between the semifinal and final rounds, and electrified the audience with their high-flying moves. Misterio and Psicosis eventually brought their rivalry to the United States as well.

In an uncharacteristic move, the WWE allowed Misterio to return to Mexico for one match, where he reprised that long-running feud with Psicosis. Now known as **Nicho el Millionario** (the name Psicosis chose after being unmasked years ago),

Misterio's hated rival teamed with mat master **Negro Casas** of EMLL to face the original **La Parka** and Misterio in Tijuana. Misterio and La Parka prevailed in front of a sellout crowd of more than 6,000 in El Auditorio, the building in which Misterio broke in years before under the mask of **El Colibri**. Also on the card was Misterio's uncle, **Rey Sr.**, who lost his locks in a best-of-three-falls hair vs. mask match with **Dr. Wagner** after **The Kiss**, a former rival of Misterio, interfered on Wagner's behalf. Fortunately, to avoid further confusion, neither the bogus La Parka nor the bogus Psicosis (both of AAA infamy) appeared on the card.

Latin Lover, a AAA mainstay, managed to *keep* his famous black locks, beating **Hector Garza** in a recent hair vs. hair match in Monterrey. The match drew a huge audience, although some Mexican periodicals had stated openly their belief that Latin Lover, with an acting deal for a soap opera pending, could not possibly lose his hair. While many probably agreed with that logic, the event still drew the biggest audience for a live event in Mexico in months. Since then, AAA has conducted some events and television tapings under the name LLL, preparing itself for the possibility of moving to a television network other than Galavision. The reason for the name change is Galavision owns the rights to the name AAA, so **Antonio Pena** has been trying to create a new identity for the company in case the change of networks does happen.

The European scene continues to blossom, as independent cards are becoming standard fare not only in traditional hotbeds like Britain (FWA, All Star) and Germany (German Stampede, wXw), but also in Italy, Norway, and now in France as well. Infrequent cards are also held in Ireland and Austria, and groups have been using a mixture of talent from other European nations in addition to American and Japanese stars. For the first time in years, there has even been talk of a re-emerging scene in South America, as both Chile and Argentina have hosted independent cards of late. While South American countries have never been known as wrestling hotbeds in the past, perhaps now is the time for a breakthrough group to step up, since the regions are largely competition-free.

One wrestler who has become as much of an institution on the European independents as he is here on the independent circuit in his native America is **Chris Hero**. The agile heavyweight, best known for his work in IWA Mid-South, a prominent independent based in Indiana, recently spent a month abroad, touring Germany, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Since the spring of 2003, Hero has reigned as champion of the Essen, Germany-based Westside Xtreme Wrestling, and has been defending his title everywhere he goes.

Another wrestler in demand on several continents of late is **Nosawa**. In addition to recent appearances with American companies like MLW and NWA-TNA, Nosawa has become a regular with EMLL in Mexico, where he often teams with other Japanese wrestlers for trios matches. Nosawa originally built his reputation by competing in violent hardcore matches in a number of Japan's independent garbage groups. Since then, he has trained in a variety of styles, and is as adept at Lucha Libre as he is at swinging a steel chair.

What once seemed like an endless feud between Rey Misterio Jr. and Psicosis seemed to end a few years ago. Not so fast! WWE granted Misterio permission to wrestle on a show in Tijuana this fall. He prevailed over Psicosis in a tag team match. Rey's uncle didn't fare so well on the same show.

Nosawa will soon be teaming with another chair-swinging Luchador, La Parka, for an upcoming All-Japan Pro Wrestling tour. There, he'll be under the guise of **Parka Guerrera** for the duration of the Real World Tag League, an annual round-robin tournament that is traditionally second in popularity only to the Champions Carnival. The Tag League will also include the peculiar team of **Mask of Tiger** (the new ring name of **Satoru Sayama**, the original **Tiger Mask**) and a masked **Jinsei Shinzaki**, calling himself **Nihon Kamikaze**. An American tandem of **Justin Credible** and current NWA-TNA star **Ekmo** (formerly **Jamal** of WWE's Three Minute Warning) is also entered into this year's tournament. □

PWI official ratings

For period ended December 12, 2003

TOP 10

1. **BROCK LESNAR**
   295, Minneapolis, MN
   (1) WWE Smackdown champion
2. **TRIPLE-H**
   269, Greenwich, CT
   (7) WWE Raw champion
3. **TOSHIAKI KAWADA**
   245, Ashikaga, Japan
   (6) All-Japan Triple Crown champion
4. **JEFF JARRETT**
   230, Nashville, TN
   (3) NWA heavyweight champion
5. **KANE**
   326, St. Louis, MO
   (9) No. 1 contender: WWE Raw title
6. **CHRIS BENOIT**
   224, Edmonton, Alberta
   (-) No. 1 contender: WWE Smackdown title
7. **KENTA KOBASHI**
   282, Fukuchiyama, Japan
   (4) GHC heavyweight champion
8. **JOHN CENA**
   260, Los Angeles, CA
   (-) No. 2 contender: WWE Smackdown title
9. **BILL GOLDBERG**
   283, Tulsa, OK
   (2) No. 2 contender: WWE Raw title
10. **ROB VAN DAM**
    237, Battle Creek, MI
    (-) No. 3 contender: WWE Raw title

Brock Lesnar

TAG TEAMS

1. **THE BASHAM BROTHERS**
   Combined weight: 492 pounds
   (3) WWE Smackdown tag team champions
2. **BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY**
   Combined weight: 579 pounds
   (1) No. 1 contenders: WWE Raw tag title
3. **YUJI NAGATA & HIROSHI TANAHASHI**
   Combined weight: 458 pounds
   (-) GHC tag team champions
4. **BATISTA & RIC FLAIR**
   Combined weight: 561 pounds
   (-) WWE Raw tag team champions
5. **B.G. JAMES & RON KILLINGS**
   Combined weight: 491 pounds
   (-) NWA tag team champions
6. **EDDIE & CHAVO GUERRERO JR.**
   Combined weight: 408 pounds
   (9) No. 1 contenders: WWE Smackdown tag title
7. **OSAMU NISHIMURA & HIROYOSHI TENZAN**
   Combined weight: 505 pounds
   (-) IWGP International tag team champions
8. **ROB CONWAY & RENE DUPREE**
   Combined weight: 490 pounds
   (4) No. 2 contenders: WWE Raw tag title
9. **KEIJI MUTO & ARASHI**
   Combined weight: 471 pounds
   (8) All-Japan International tag team champions
10. **SHELTON BENJAMIN & CHARLIE HAAS**
    Combined weight: 510 pounds
    (7) No. 2 contenders: WWE Smackdown tag title

WWE RAW

Raw Champion:
TRIPLE-H
(1) 269, Greenwich, CT

1—**KANE**
(2) 326, St. Louis, MO
2—**BILL GOLDBERG**
(C) 283, Tulsa, OK
3—**ROB VAN DAM**
(3) 237, Battle Creek, MI
4—**RANDY ORTON**
(5) 265, St. Louis, MO
5—**BATISTA**
(6) 318, Washington, DC
6—**BOOKER T**
(-) 250, Houston, TX
7—**CHRIS JERICHO**
(4) 225, Winnipeg, Manitoba
8—**MARK HENRY**
(-) 372, Austin, TX
9—**SHAWN MICHAELS**
(10) 217, San Antonio, TX
10—**CHRISTIAN**
(9) 225, Toronto, Ontario

WWE SMACKDOWN

Smackdown Champion:
BROCK LESNAR
(C) 295, Minneapolis, MN

1—**CHRIS BENOIT**
(6) 224, Edmonton, Alberta
2—**JOHN CENA**
(4) 260, Los Angeles, CA
3—**THE BIG SHOW**
(3) 485, Aiken, SC
4—**TAJIRI**
(7) 213, Tokyo, Japan
5—**REY MISTERIO JR.**
(8) 163, San Diego, CA
6—**EDDIE GUERRERO**
(5) 223, El Paso, TX
7—**A-TRAIN**
(9) 353, Boston, MA
8—**JAMIE NOBLE**
(10) 190, Hanover, WV
9—**HARDCORE HOLLY**
(-) 249, Mobile, AL
10—**RHYNO**
(-) 275, Detroit, MI

OVW

OVW Champion:
MARK MAGNUS
(C) 231, Syracuse, NY

1—**JOHNNY JETER**
(1) 218, San Diego, CA
2—**NICK DINSMORE**
(3) 226, Jefferson, IN
3—**MATT CAPPOTELLI**
(4) 220, Norwich, NY
4—**CHRIS CAGE**
(9) 220, Youngstown, OH
5—**JOHN HENNIGAN**
(7) 204, Los Angeles, CA
6—**CARLY COLON**
(10) 210, San Turce, Puerto Rico
7—**BANE**
(-) 285, Tombstone, AZ
8—**TANK TOLAND**
(-) 220, Margate, NJ
9—**SEVEN**
(-) 278, Memphis, TN
10—**AARON STEVENS**
(-) 237, Boston, MA

RING OF HONOR

ROH Champion:
SAMOA JOE
(C) 270, American Samoa

1—**A.J. STYLES**
(3) 202, Gainesville, GA
2—**CHRISTOPHER DANIELS**
(5) 210, Los Angeles, CA
3—**HOMICIDE**
(1) 220, Brooklyn, NY
4—**MATT STRYKER**
(10) 220, Cincinnati, OH
5—**C.M. PUNK**
(4) 220, Chicago, IL
6—**B.J. WHITMER**
(8) 210, Owensboro, KY
7—**JAY BRISCOE**
(-) 184, Laurel, DE
8—**STEVE CORINO**
(9) 225, Sea Isle City, NJ
9—**MARK BRISCOE**
(-) 188, Laurel, DE
10—**RAVEN**
(7) 243, Short Hills, NJ

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

ACTION WRESTLING ENTERTAINMENT: Champion—Title Vacant; **1**—Chi Chi Cruz; **2**—Buff Bagwell; **3**—Dan Severn; **4**—Shane Madison; **5**—Adam Knight; **6**—Notorious T.I.D.; **7**—Di Caprio; **8**—Robby Royce; **9**—Massive Damage; **10**—Jon Cutler.

AMERICAN WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Roger Blade; **1**—Spazz; **2**—Eric Draven; **3**—Chris Rave; **4**—Damien Morrus; **5**—Madd Dawg Murphy; **6**—Myrle Hardekin; **7**—Cooter; **8**—Big Mike D; **9**—Chris Blayze; **10**—Jerry Wilson.

BAD 2 THE BONE WRESTLING: Champion—Vic the Bruiser; **1**—J.C. Bailey; **2**—Simon Sezz; **3**—Randy Royal; **4**—Manslaughter; **5**—Crusher Bones; **6**—Apollo; **7**—Billy Black; **8**—Chuck Steele; **9**—Jade; **10**—Steve Mariono.

BORDER CITY WRESTLING: Champion—Shane Douglas; **1**—Raven; **2**—Chris Sabin; **3**—Eric Young; **4**—A-1; **5**—Bobby Rude; **6**—Dyson Pryce; **7**—Alex Shelley; **8**—Mike Legacy; **9**—Johnny Bravo; **10**—Jaime D.

CENTRAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Mongoose; **1**—Terry Alan; **2**—J.T. Money; **3**—Jad T. Lungini; **4**—Maddawg; **5**—Redneck Superstar; **6**—Boxcar Bruce; **7**—Syxe; **8**—Seduction; **9**—Cherry; **10**—Skip Sherwood.

ENGLISH WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Jonny the Body; **1**—Shawn Christopher; **2**—The Bull; **3**—Sam Danials; **4**—Coalminer D; **5**—Shockwave; **6**—Shawn the Man; **7**—Ric Gunner; **8**—Ashley Steel; **9**—Coalminer P; **10**—Kid Kandy.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Ken Steel; **1**—Dustin Daniels; **2**—Knight Stalker; **3**—Dragan Frost; **4**—Buffalo Frits; **5**—Seth; **6**—Frank Savage; **7**—Wyld Chyld; **8**—Tone-Up; **9**—The Unknown Soldier; **10**—Mr. Beautiful.

NATIONAL WRESTLING LEAGUE: Champion—Leslie Leatherman; **1**—Gangrel; **2**—Samu; **3**—John Rambo; **4**—Nikolai Volkoff; **5**—Jake Davis; **6**—The Patriot; **7**—King Kaluha; **8**—Morgus the Maniac; **9**—Prof. Egon Ecton; **10**—John Balsamo.

NWA WILDSIDE: Champion—Onyx; **1**—Hotstuff Hernandez; **2**—Rainman; **3**—Mikal Adryan; **4**—Caprice Coleman; **5**—Murder One; **6**—Seth Delay; **7**—Slim J; **8**—Altar Boy Luke; **9**—Ray Gordy; **10**—Azrael.

SUPREME CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Koko B. Ware; **1**—Billy Maverick; **2**—Eric Draven; **3**—Brandon Hunter; **4**—Mason the Mangler; **5**—Joey Moore; **6**—Tello Ozeata; **7**—Roger Blade; **8**—Spazz; **9**—Todd Morton; **10**—John York.

TORNADO PRO WRESTLING: Champion—AWOL; **1**—Romero Contreras; **2**—Anthony Jackson; **3**—Sonny C; **4**—Brian Lakewood; **5**—Deuce Rodriguez; **6**—Outcast; **7**—Karl Davis; **8**—Rick Styles; **9**—Poo Bear; **10**—Butch Dalton.

WORLD XTREME WRESTLING: Champion—Gene Snisky; **1**—Slyk Wagner Brown; **2**—L.A. Smooth; **3**—Samu; **4**—Rapid Fire Maldonado; **5**—Mana; **6**—Jake Bishop; **7**—Afa Jr.; **8**—Eddie Guapo; **9**—Black Pearl; **10**—Sugaa.

NWA

NWA Champion:
JEFF JARRETT
(C) 230, Nashville, TN

1—A.J. STYLES
(1) 202, Gainesville, GA
2—RAVEN
(3) 243, Short Hills, NJ
3—J.T. WOLFEN
(2) 297, New Haven, CT
4—RICKY MURDOCH
(4) 261, Houston, TX
5—STING
(–) 260, Venice Beach, CA
6—ROB STARDOM
(9) 215, Winnipeg, Manitoba
7—JOHNNY MOSS
(–) 240, Egremont, England
8—MICHAEL SHANE
(–) 221, San Antonio, TX
9—ONYX
(–) 218, Jamaica City, NY
10—PRESTON QUINN
(6) 240, Gloucester, VA

NWA-TNA

NWA Champion:
JEFF JARRETT
(C) 230, Nashville, TN

1—MICHAEL SHANE
(1) 221, San Antonio, TX
2—A.J. STYLES
(2) 202, Gainesville, GA
3—STING
(–) 260, Venice Beach, CA
4—RAVEN
(3) 243, Short Hills, NJ
5—KID KASH
(4) 202, Johnson City, TN
6—CHRIS SABIN
(5) 207, Hell, MI
7—ABYSS
(–) 308, parts unknown
8—CHRISTOPHER DANIELS
(8) 210, Los Angeles, CA
9—SHANE DOUGLAS
(–) 255, Pittsburgh, PA
10—SONJAY DUTT
(–) 185, Bombay, India

JAPAN

1—TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(2) 245, Ashikaga, Japan
All-Japan Triple Crown champion
2—KENTA KOBASHI
(1) 282, Fukuchiyama, Japan
GHC heavywweight champion
3—SHINSUKE NAKAMURA
(–) 231, Tokyo, Japan
IWGP heavywweight champion
4—HIROYOSHI TENZAN
(4) 270, Tokyo, Japan
5—YOSHIHIRO TAKAYAMA
(3) 270, Sapporo, Japan
6—SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(–) 287, Gifu, Japan
7—TAKASHI SUGIURA
(9) 209, Nagoya, Japan
8—KOJI KANEMOTO
(–) 205, Osaka, Japan
9—AKIRA TAUE
(–) 265, Chichibu, Japan
10—KEIJI MUTO
(5) 245, Yamanashi, Japan

MEXICO

1—SHOCKER
(1) 185, Guadalajara, Mexico
2—EL HIJO DEL SANTO
(2) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico
3—MR. NIEBLA
(3) 185, Cualtitlan, Mexico
4—HECTOR GARZA
(4) 220, Monterrey, Mexico
5—JUVENTUD GUERRERA
(–) 165, Mexico City, Mexico
6—UNIVERSO DOS MIL
(7) 240, Mexico City, Mexico
7—PIERROTH JR.
(9) 251, Cuernavaca, Mexico
8—PERRO AGUAYO JR.
(5) 165, Zacatecas, Mexico
9—LA PARKA
(–) 235, Torreon, Mexico
10—ATLANTIS
(–) 180, Guadalajara, Mexico

ratings analysis

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 22 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important–and respected–ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Talkin' next year already? Sure, why not. We've already devoted two pages to readers predictions for 2004, so why shouldn't we speculate a bit here. Most importantly, who might our 2004 Wrestler of the Year be? Four choices quickly come to mind. This year's winner, **Kurt Angle**, missed about three total months of ring time (notice that his name doesn't appear in the ratings at all) and still walked away with five *PWI* Achievement Awards in 2003. Only more health problems could stop him from being a top candidate.

Brock Lesnar took home the top honors for 2002—his very first in WWE—and you can believe he'll hold the Smackdown title for at least a portion of 2004, so he could win the most prestigious award in two of his first three years with **Vince McMahon's** company.

On the Raw side, your top two choices would seem to be **Triple-H** and **Bill Goldberg**. But Triple-H is a budding star in Hollywood, he has been injury-prone, and he is not held in high regard by a lot of fans. As for Goldberg, he hasn't yet committed to a second year in WWE and could conceivably be gone after WrestleMania XX.

So perhaps we should dig deeper into that WWE roster. We'll start near the top of the Raw rankings. **Kane** could be a sleeper choice, although his pushes have been uneven in the past, and he seems to have main event-level success in only brief spurts. We'll see if that changes in 2004.

Then there's **Rob Van Dam**, who, like Kane, Triple-H, and Goldberg from the Raw roster, made the overall Top 10 in this issue. The story of RVD has been told many times in the *PWI* family of magazines. It doesn't look like he'll ever be given the ball and told to run with it in WWE. So unless he is a truly spectacular Intercontinental champion for much of 2004, he won't be a strong candidate for Wrestler of the Year in '04.

Rob Van Dam

However, RVD has a little something in common with Goldberg. His contract also comes up for renewal in 2004, and insiders will be following negotiations of both men carefully. Some believe RVD would be happier splitting time between TNA, Japan, and the independents, where he would have the chance to showcase himself in longer matches.

Moving down the Raw rankings, expect **Chris Jericho** and **Booker T** to remain at about the same level through 2004 (and thus don't expect them to strongly contend for Wrestler of the Year in 2004). But it should be fun to track the progress of the two men ranked just above them in this issue, **Randy Orton** and **Batista**. The two of them have different strengths, but WWE is giving both every chance to become breakout stars. Maybe one of the two will have a spectacular breakout year in 2004 and claim his first Raw title.

Finally, there's **Shawn Michaels**, ranked ninth this month. Don't rule out Michaels making a run at Wrestler of the Year now that he has stated that he is ready to tackle a full-time schedule again.

As for the Smackdown side, it doesn't look like many of those stars ranked in this issue's ratings have a great chance at grabbing the ultimate award. **Chris Benoit** fits into the same category as RVD. **The Big Show**, in spite of all his improvement, seems like a longshot. And if you know how WWE has handled cruiserweights in the past, you can pretty much eliminate three wrestlers in this month's Smackdown top 10 right away—**Tajiri**, **Rey Misterio Jr.**, and **Jamie Noble**. They just won't be pushed strongly enough to warrant much Wrestler of the Year consideration.

The two wrestlers bringing up the rear in the Smackdown rankings—**Hardcore Holly** and **Rhyno**—seem destined to be mid-card players who have occasional flirtations with the top tier at best.

That brings us to **A-Train**, who's ranked an impressive seventh in this issue. Train has the size McMahon loves and has great intensity, but he has always seemed to lack that intangible "it" factor that elite wrestlers possess. Maybe he can skyrocket to the top as a fan favorite. Wouldn't that be a great story?

A-Train

The best two Smackdown sleeper picks for Wrestler of the Year in 2004 would have to be **Eddie Guerrero** and **John Cena**. The two of them connected with fans in a big way in 2004. They could be much, much stronger in 2004 if WWE puts its faith in them.

That's a wrap! As always, if you have any questions or comments regarding our ratings or what you see here, we want to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *PWI*, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003 YEAR IN REVIEW

Section compiled By Dan Murphy

2003 saw Bill Goldberg put an end to Triple-H's championship reign with a brutal jackhammer at Unforgiven. It was a personal triumph for Goldberg, who many critics said could never succeed in WWE. While many WWE fans initially were slow to embrace "Da Man," Goldberg's popularity has continued to grow, and so has Goldberg's comfort level. There's a good chance he'll still be Raw champion at WrestleMania and will continue to be a major player in WWE throughout 2004 and perhaps beyond.

2003 saw the maturation of A.J. Styles. Styles was largely an afterthought early in 2003, as Raven and Jeff Jarrett battled for the NWA title. But while Raven couldn't get the job done, Styles scored an upset win over Jarrett and Raven in a three-way. Styles, who had previously declined a developmental deal from WWE, was TNA's first homegrown star and helped the promotion establish credibility. Instead of being a home to WWE castoffs, TNA was seen as a fresh alternative—largely due to Styles.

2003 saw both Kurt Angle and Brock Lesnar flirt with danger at WrestleMania. Doctors advised Angle against wrestling at all, for fear that he could cause permanent damage to his spinal cord if he landed awkwardly. While he wrestled somewhat conservatively, Angle still took several dangerous bumps. Then, in a scary moment, Lesnar attempted his shooting star press, only to crash down squarely on his head. It's a minor miracle that both men were able to walk out of the ring.

2003 saw the death of Hart family patriarch Stu Hart. Hart's contribution to wrestling was undeniable. With his Stampede promotion, Hart showcased realistic, gritty matches and emphasized submission holds and mat wrestling. He helped to break down the size barrier in wrestling, showing that a skilled smaller wrestler could succeed. Hart trained a who's who of wrestlers. "Stu was one of those larger-than-life human beings who come along so seldom," Vince McMahon said at his funeral.

THIS WAS THE year that wrestling came face-to-face with its future.

The Rock's Hollywood commitments kept him out of the ring for most of the year, and Steve Austin was forced to retire due to injury. Hulk Hogan walked out of WWE early in the summer. The largest promotion in the U.S. was forced to get by without its biggest names of the past five years.

Remarkably, it did fine.

Kurt Angle and Brock Lesnar became the focal points of the Smackdown brand with a feud that ran throughout the year. Rey Misterio Jr., Eddie Guerrero, and John Cena likewise helped to fill the void, becoming top attractions for the Smackdown brand, and Vince McMahon's feuds with Hogan, Zach Gowen, and his own daughter, Stephanie, provided Smackdown with all the drama it needed.

While new stars emerged on Smackdown, the Raw brand took an even riskier approach, as past greats like Shawn Michaels, Ric Flair, and Kevin Nash became major players and Triple-H ran roughshod. But Raw's biggest gamble of all was signing Bill Goldberg and letting him get his hands on the Raw championship. Despite a rough start in WWE, "Da Man" was doing well by year's end.

Everything wasn't rosy for WWE, though. Arena attendance continued its downward trend, and TV ratings are still well below where they were just a few years ago. While some fans criticize Vince McMahon for promoting his family over his wrestlers or for letting storylines grow stagnant, WWE's finances are still in relatively good shape, proving that the business can roll along even without Austin and The Rock.

NWA-TNA also silenced many of its critics simply by surviving. The little promotion that thought it could offer weekly pay-per-views has done just that and has managed to lure Sting, Raven, Lex Luger, and other big names to the TNA Asylum. In fact, TNA is currently preparing for the biggest match in its brief history: a clash between Jeff Jarrett and Hulk Hogan.

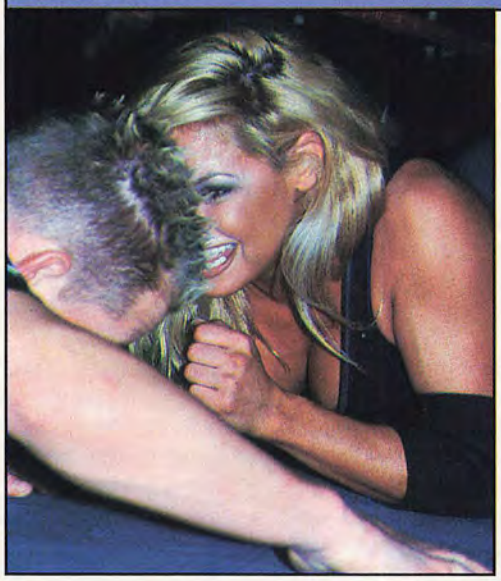
And there's Ring of Honor. ROH has built up a strong following, similar to ECW's old Viking Hall faithful of years past. But this time, instead of hardcore matches, the fans are reacting to hard-fought, largely scientific matches between some of the brightest indy talents in the business. ROH success has been a springboard for A.J. Styles, Christopher Daniels, and The Amazing Red in NWA-TNA. Independent wrestling is hardly dead.

Goldberg in WWE. Roddy Piper vs. Hulk Hogan yet again. Raven and Jeff Jarrett in an epic battle. This year saw plenty of surprises. 2003 was a year to remember, and a year in which the future took center stage.

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

"YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT TERRI'S GOING IN FOR ..."

A girl has to keep up with her gossip, and Trish Stratus seems perfectly content to share some juicy secrets with a referee at ringside. Judging by where his eyes seem to be focused, though, the ref might be giving what Trish is saying a little less than his full attention.

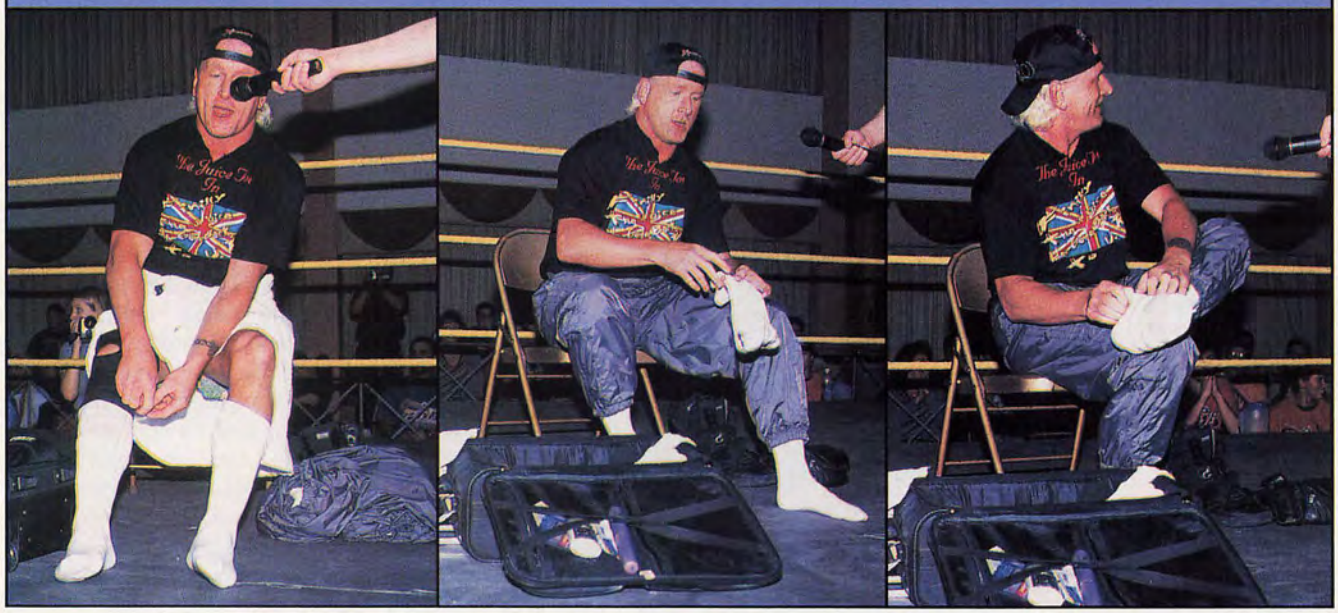


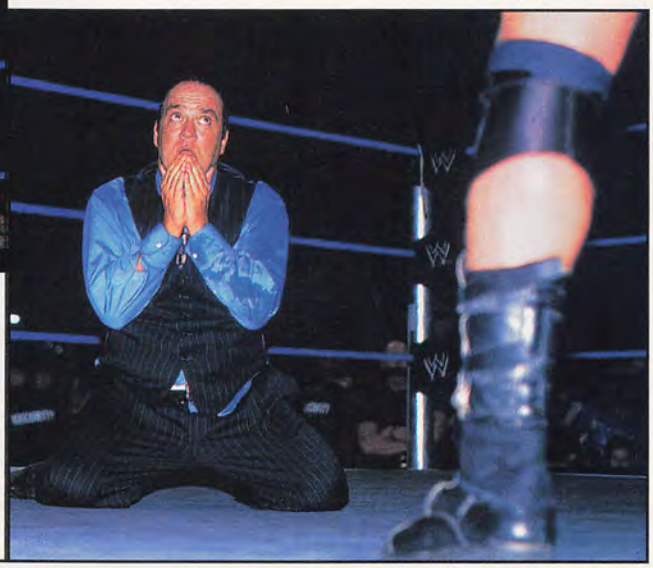
MAD MIKEY HELPS SHARK BOY STRETCH OUT HIS TOE FINS BACKSTAGE

Michael Lockwood, better known as Crash Holly and Mad Mikey in NWA-TNA, seemed to be finding a nice niche in NWA-TNA after his release from WWE. Sadly, he died in November. Despite any problems he may have been having in his personal life, he was always an entertaining and charismatic in-ring performer.

"YOU WANT A PROMO? I'LL GIVE YOU A PROMO ABOUT A DELAYED FLIGHT, A RENTAL CAR WITH A FLAT, AND BAD DIRECTIONS FROM THE PROMOTER. NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE TO PUT ON MY PANTS!"

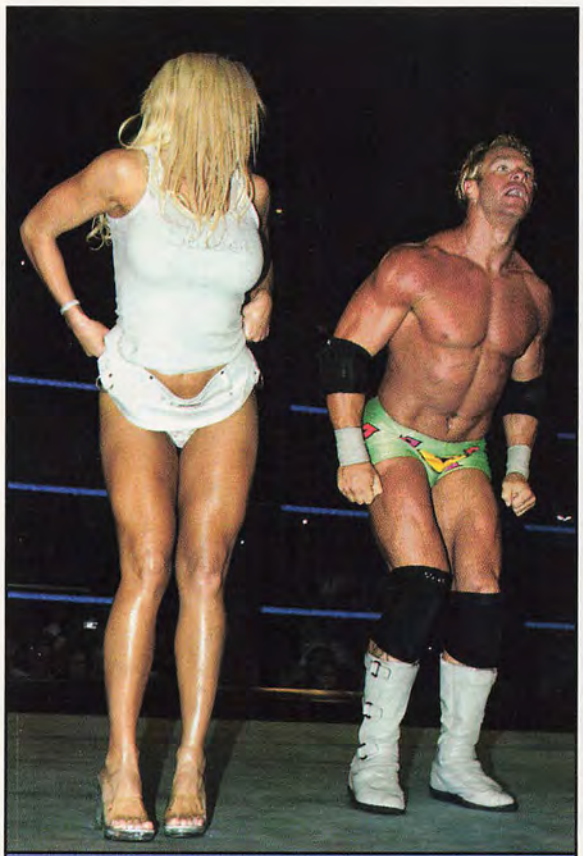
Chris Hamrick is a study in composure as he cuts a promo while changing in the middle of the ring. Maybe he should have just caught an earlier flight.





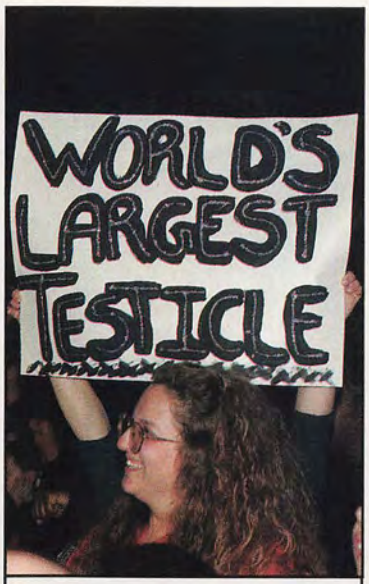
BOY, IN RETROSPECT, THAT DOUBLE-CROSS MUST REALLY LOOK LIKE A BAD IDEA

Paul Heyman was ready to give Brock Lesnar all the supplication he could ask for when the two crossed paths after Heyman sold out Lesnar in favor of The Big Show. All that butt-kissing must have worked. By fall, "The Next Big Thing" and his former agent were back on good terms. No one was happier about that than Heyman.



TORRIE: 360, FRONT VIEW

After Torrie Wilson made the cover of *Playboy*, she couldn't help but show off her body to fans. Not that too many fans minded, of course.

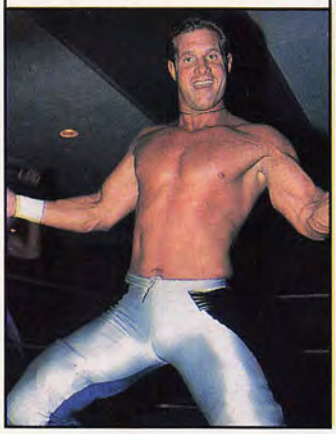


THE CHARTER MEMBER OF THE ELEPHANTITIS SUFFERERS SOCIETY DECLINED A TITANTRON GREETING IN FAVOR OF HIS OWN HOMEMADE SIGN

SPANKY WAVES TO HIS MOM IN THE BACK ROW AS HE AND CHRIS CAGE PREPARE FOR THE CHICKENFIGHT TOURNAMENT FINAL

DANCING FOOLS

The happy feet of Matt Cappotelli and Nova have us pining for the dance steps of Disco Inferno, Alex Wright, and Tokyo Magnum. Nova's Donkey Kong impression would probably have him removed from most wedding reception dance floors, and Cappotelli looks like he's belting out a tune from *Phantom Of The Opera*. Booker T could teach them both a thing or two. Imagine a Cappotellaroonie ...



STEPHANIE McMAHON IS MOMENTARILY DISTRACTED DURING HER MATCH AGAINST HER FATHER WHEN THE REFEREE TELLS HER ABOUT THE FISH HE CAUGHT EARLIER IN THE WEEK

SUPER HERO IN TRAINING

Think the guy working the merchandise table was happy to see this guy coming?

"WHY DON'T YOU COME WITH ME, LITTLE GIRL, ON A MAGIC CARPET RIDE"

Shawn Divari has added his own twist to the old Superfly splash. All he needs is an old throw rug and Divari can execute his "Magic Carpet Ride" finisher anytime he's asked to do it!

TORRIE: 360, REAR VIEW

For a guy who calls himself "Mr. Ass," Billy Gunn doesn't seem to be paying a lot of attention to Torrie's backside. He must be the only guy in the arena not paying attention to Torrie's rear. Maybe his feelings for Chuck ran deeper than even he cared to admit.

THE MARCIA BRADY MEMORIAL "YOU BRODE MY NODE" AWARD GOES TO ...

Christopher Nowinski, who reacts to a shot to the proboscis in this photo. A broken nose wasn't the only injury Nowinski suffered this year. A severe concussion suffered against The Dudley Boyz has kept him sidelined since early-June and might end his career.

THE LITTLE BLACK DRESS: PRACTICAL FOR VIRTUALLY EVERY OCCASION, EXCEPT FOR SQUATTING TO ENTER AND EXIT A WRESTLING RING

"I GOT THIS TATTOO BECAUSE SHAWN MICHAELS AND I HAVE SO MUCH IN COMMON"

And if we're not mistaken, that looks like a Goldberg tattoo up above the snake and heart. We'll give you two-to-one odds that this fan is now sporting the Lesnar demon face tattoo on his back.

SPREAD THE LOVE (OR PUCKER UP: PART I)

Ernest Hoost plants a smooch on the dome of Bob Sapp during a W-1 card January in Japan. It's good to see *someone* was in a playful mood during this match. You see, critics blasted the contest as one of the year's worst matches, badly tarnishing kickboxer Sapp's reputation as a can't-miss pro wrestling prospect.

CULTURE CLASH

As far as the members of Special K were concerned, the rave was going just fine until some jacked up Hare Krishna showed up. Unfortunately for Special K, the bald guy is Low-Ki, whose no-frills style doesn't exactly mesh with the glowsticks and furry hat set. Still, Special K has the former Ring of Honor champ at a decided disadvantage here. Too bad they don't seem to notice that.

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

THE JOEY STYLES CATFIIIIIGHT!!! AWARD GOES TO ...

Lollipop and Tracy Brooks for their knockdown, drag-out brawl in NWA-TNA. Moments after this photo was taken, we think Lollipop lost her top and continued to battle without it. Unfortunately, Will Welsh absconded with those photos. You can register your outrage with Will by dropping him an e-mail at prowrestlingillustrated@yahoo.com. Give him hell.

"WHAT'S THAT? YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TAUNT LOUDER, KID!"

Ohio Valley Wrestling's Seven takes a moment to listen to the fans' opinion of him before a match. Who says bad guys don't react well to a little creative criticism?

THE ULTIMATE HALLOWEEN TREAT

Take a vat of chocolate. Add Dawn Marie, dressed in a skimpy Wonder Woman outfit. Remove the top. Take a very cold shower and try to get these images out of your mind. If Al Wilson was still alive, this would have killed him.

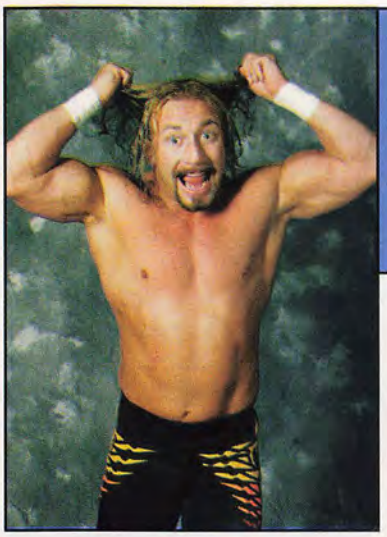
"PLEASE DON'T KILL PAUL!"

Paul London definitely has his hands full with B.J. Whitmer's variation of a camel clutch. London's daredevil antics in Ring of Honor often prompted fans to break out in chants of "Please don't die!" as London became one of ROH's most popular competitors. As a reward for his continued survival, London received a WWE contract. Unfortunately for him, his first televised Smackdown match was against Brock Lesnar. We haven't seen much of London since.

"WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD..."
Stacy Keibler, Test, and Trish Stratus skip merrily down the Yellow Brick Road to see the wonderful Wizard of Oz. Sing along with Test: "If I only had charisma . . ."

PUCKER UP: PART II
Brian "Spanky" Kendrick looks like he's going to plant a big, sloppy one on Kurt Angle. Considering Spanky streaked (almost) naked through an arena just to get his WWE contract, there's no telling what he'll do.

CHOCOLATE AND THE SMACKDOWN ANNOUNCING CREW: TWO GREAT TASTES THAT TASTE GREAT TOGETHER
Tazz didn't seem to mind getting a bit chocolatey during a Halloween-themed episode of *Smackdown*, but Michael Cole seems less than pleased that his broadcast colleague is dripping the goo on him. Maybe Cole would be a bit cheerier if he got to cavort with a chocolate-covered Dawn Marie.

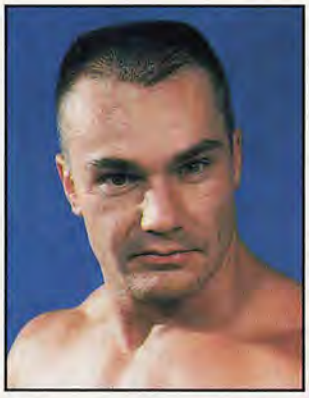


YOU MEAN I WENT FROM A RUN AS WWE CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION TO INDY CARDS IN ARMORIES IN JUST THREE YEARS?
It's enough to make poor Jerry Lynn pull out his hair!

AFTER NETTING DANNY MAFF, H.C. LOC, AND DeVITO PRESERVED HIM AND PINNED HIM ON A BALSA WOOD MOUNTING BOARD FOR DISPLAY

UH-OH, MIKEY WHIPWRECK'S BEEN HITTING THE TEQUILA AGAIN. SOMEONE GRAB HIS MIKE BEFORE HE DOES HIS SPEEDY GONZALEZ IMPRESSION!
On the other hand, the very un-PC Mexican stereotype paid off for Los Guerreros. Maybe Mikey's on to something here. Someone get him a low rider!

QUOTABLES



"We saw men, women, and children going to the bathroom in the streets. You see someone walking on the sidewalk. They would stop, hike up their skirt or drop their pants, and crap right in the street with people watching. It was the filthiest, most disgusting place I've ever been."

—Lance Storm, talking about what he saw during Raw's tour of India, stormwrestling.com

"If you'd been a little smarter, we might be having a ***Nitro*** *reunion!"*

—Gene Okerlund, humiliating Eric Bischoff prior to *Raw's* 10th anniversary special, *Raw*

"I'd say it would have to be over 100. In Texas, we were poor and they were cheap. I ate them every day until we got our developmental deals."

—American Dragon, settling on an approximate number of how many consecutive days he had eaten Ramen noodles, "12 Questions," *PWI*, June 2003

"Growing up, I thought that everybody died of a heart attack because ... I had 14 people in my family who suffer from this heart condition called angina, or heart disease in general. I didn't realize until about six years ago that heart attacks aren't the natural way to die."

—Kurt Angle, explaining how a genetic disease has wreaked havoc in his family, cnn.com

"In the early days, I drove all the way to North Carolina and they gave me a case of Coke as a payoff ... My father often took me to wrestling shows, including WrestleMania I on closed-circuit TV. So it didn't surprise him that I became a pro wrestler. My dad died recently, and I wish he'd been able to see me beat Buff [Bagwell] in front of more than 1,000 people."

—Doug Delicious, remembering his father following his victory over Buff Bagwell at a Maryland Championship Wrestling show, "Win, Lose, Or Draw," *PWI*, August 2003

"My neck sucks, Eric Bischoff fired me, my neck sucks."

—Steve Austin, describing state of mind after retiring from an active in-ring career, *Raw*

"He was always a willing guest on my shows, ever since I started in San Diego. I've never forgotten that. He was a great, colorful guy."

—Regis Philbin, remembering his friend Freddie Blassie, *Live With Regis & Kelly*

"In that entire time, I was only tag team champion on two occasions, and that was it! I was either a bad wrestler or smart promoter—you be the judge!"

—Jim Kettner, recalling his 35-year run as head of the ECWA, "Jim Kettner: The Man Behind The Super 8," *PWI*, August 2003

"I cannot sit through five minutes of that show without having my intelligence insulted. They desperately need to change."

—Vince Russo, offering advice to WWE Creative after WrestleMania XIX, Chicago radio station WSCR

"I don't wish injury upon anybody, but basically, I can go out there and F5 pretty much anybody. That's not a move that's impossible to do. But would I do it? No, because it's a sign of respect."

—Billy Kidman, blasting Brock Lesnar for using his regular finishing move, the shooting star press, at WrestleMania XIX, wwe.com

"There's a message in there somewhere. I don't know what exactly it is, other than falling from grace and not dealing with it, if that's what it was, not having a purpose in life beyond this business, if that's what it was. It's something that performers in our business have to learn from so they don't repeat the same mistakes that were made by others before them."

—Vince McMahon, drawing lessons from Elizabeth's death, *Confidential*

"It always gets you going 150 percent when you walk into the Garden. When you think back to all

the people that ever performed here—whether it be Frank Sinatra, the circus, the NBA, the NHL, wrestling—all the great names that stood out there, and here you are in the middle of the ring, with a sold-out crowd, in the main event. There's nothing like Madison Square Garden in the world."

—Sgt. Slaughter, explaining why it's an honor to wrestle in MSG, wwe.com

"People hear 'Hell In A Cell,' and they think of me. I don't know if there's ever been one person as synonymous with a match as I am with this, unless it's Dusty Rhodes with the bullrope match. Honestly, it's hard to live up to—not the past, but the legend of the past. I think the fall I took off the top of the cage at King of the Ring '98 keeps getting higher and higher in people's minds."

—Mick Foley, acknowledging that his greatest match has reached mythical proportions, "Press Conference," *PWI*, October 2003

"As I stand before you today, I can tell you that I have waited for this moment for a hell of a long time. When I first came to the WWE, I had a couple of goals. The Rock was one, and to get that title and to get my hands around Triple-H's neck!"

—Bill Goldberg, informing reporters of his career priorities, SummerSlam 2003 press conference

"My personal friendship with 'Stone-Cold,' and I'd be the first to admit it, has probably been a conflict of interest. I should not have those personal feelings about any talent in my role as head of talent, but it just happened that we're buddies and developed a friendship."

—Jim Ross, putting his friendship with Steve Austin in perspective, *Kingston Whig-Standard*

"There's a history of Looney Tunes and insanity in our family."

—Raven, talking about his relatives, *Pro Wrestling Torch*

"Getting in the ring is something I've always wanted to do. My father and brother forbid me to do that for a while, until I convinced them otherwise. I wanted to see what it felt like to be bounced around. It doesn't feel good, but I can't help loving being in the ring."

—Stephanie McMahon, discussing her inability to resist the spotlight, the *Fredericksburg (Virginia) Free Lance-Star*

"He was the biggest goofball. He was so funny walking up and down the ropes, doing things to make you laugh, and telling corny jokes."

—Christina Lockwood, remembering her late husband, Michael Lockwood (Crash Holly), with fondness, the *Salisbury Post*

"I don't care about winning, I don't care about losing, I don't care about championships. I just care about putting on the best match I can and having the people entertained because this is show business."

—Chris Jericho, describing his attitude toward pro wrestling, the *Winnipeg Sun*

"TNA was looking at Hogan, and Hogan was looking at TNA … That's really the truth. I've said it on TNA, but it is a reality. I took TNA to Hogan (referring to his guitar shot attack on Hogan in Japan), instead of Hogan coming to TNA because I knew he wanted to be part of it. The best storylines are reality-based. They always have been and always will be."

—Jeff Jarrett, explaining how NWA-TNA's deal with Hulk Hogan came about, "Q & A," *The Wrestler*, March 2004

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

PUCKER UP: PART III

When the arena lights shone off Maven's head in just that way, Steven Richards was so overcome with emotion that he simply had to smooch the first *Tough Enough* winner. Either that or Richards was screaming something at Maven. Maybe it was, "I'll see you on *Heat*, punk!"

"HEY, DANNY, IS IT THREE SHORT BREATHS AND TWO CHEST COMPRESSIONS, OR THREE CHEST COMPRESSIONS AND TWO LONG BREATHS?"

The Basham Brothers seem to be having flashbacks to some long-forgotten CPR courses as they ponder how to treat the fallen Shaniqua. Luckily for her, she just had the wind knocked out of her and wasn't in need of more serious resuscitation.

NOW PULL THE CORD!

Chris Jericho looked like he was skydiving without a parachute after taking this gorilla press from Test.

"I DON'T THINK WE'RE IN PHILLY ANYMORE, JUSTIN"

You'd think Perry Saturn would be familiar with the inside of an asylum, but he seems a bit confused to be inside the TNA Asylum in Nashville. At one time, Saturn and Justin Credible were considered two of ECW's best and brightest. What a long, strange trip it's been!

AT LEAST HE'S WEARING SOMETHING UNDER THE KILT

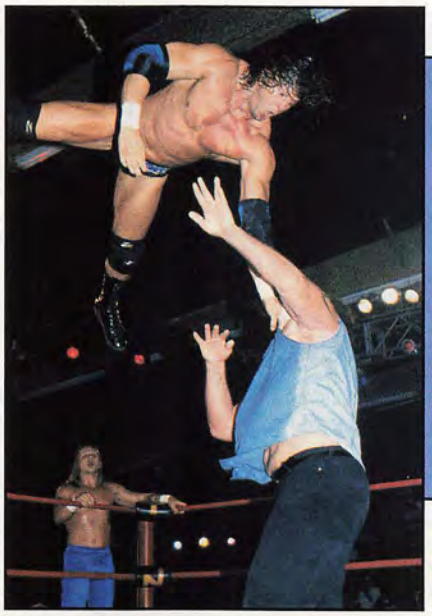
Modesty is probably the last thing on Raven's mind as he gets pinned by a handcuffed Jeff Jarrett during their much-hyped April 30 NWA-TNA clash. Raven actually kicked out of this cover, but it wasn't long before Jarrett surprised him with the stroke to score a huge win. Fortunately for all of us, Roddy Piper wasn't in this photo, as he often says the only things he wears under his kilt are his boots.

WHO NEEDS SLEEPING PILLS? I'VE GOT A MATTRESS AND SYNN'S CUTTING A PROMO. MY INSOMNIA IS CURED!

New York native Matt Cappotelli might be having a hard time getting used to OVW's schedule. But he certainly knows the importance of getting a good night's sleep—even during the middle of a show.

PER LITTLE KNOWN JAPANESE TRADITION, TAJIRI RECEIVES HIS PREMATCH DENTAL EXAM

Maybe the referee just wanted to see if Tajiri would be using his standard green mist, or the more toxic red, yellow, or black varieties. Whatever it is, Tajiri doesn't seem too happy about it.

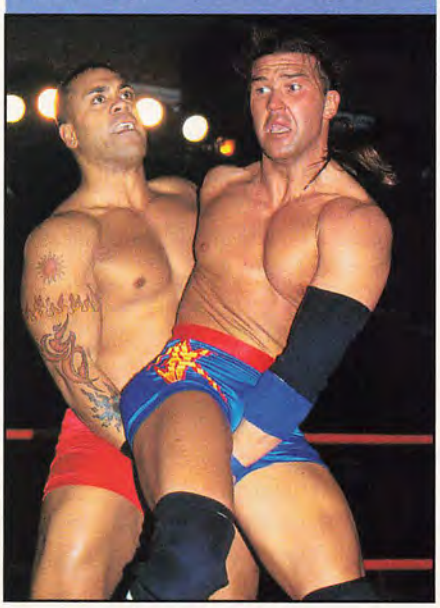


NOTE THE INCREDIBLE POISE OF CHRIS HARRIS AS HE PERFORMS ONE-ARMED PUSHUPS WHILE BALANCING ON ABYSS' COLLARBONE

Actually, we're not quote sure if Harris is diving at Abyss from the top rope, or if the masked monster has chucked "The Wildcat" eight feet into the air. However, we are sure of two things: Harris is in for a harsh landing, and Abyss should consider wearing an Under Armor shirt to hide that gut.

UM, AWKWARD

Frankie Kazarian looks a little (okay, a *lot*) uncomfortable with Sonny Siaki's grip on this pumphandle slam. We wouldn't be surprised if Kazarian's voice went up a few octaves after taking this move, which some of us at *PWI* call "The Will Welsh Special."



WRESTLEMANIA IN HELL

Al Snow picks a fight with Jim Ross as Coach is hobbled by lumbago pains. We still can't figure out what Ross and Jerry Lawler vs. Snow and Jonathan Coachman was doing on pay-per-view at Unforgiven, but we know that we don't want to see it again. Snow and Coach won the match and announcing rights on *Raw,* but Ross and Lawler were back where they belong within a matter of weeks. Now let's all pretend this never happened ...

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

NUMBERS

3 is the number of Japanese wrestling promotions running nationally televised supercards on December 31, 2003. Scheduled to be running shows were K-1 (featuring Bob Sapp against sumo yokozuna Akebono), Antonio Inoki (with his annual Bom Ba Ye show, featuring wrestlers against shootfighters), and Pride. Wrestlers from all over the country were expected to take part in the cards.

4:58 is the amount of time Brian "Spanky" Kendrick lasted against Kurt Angle in a Smackdown match on February 25. Prior to the match, Stephanie McMahon agreed to sign Kendrick to a WWE contract if he could last five minutes against Angle. Kendrick came up two seconds short, but ended up getting a contract a few weeks later anyway.

5 is the number of years that Maryland Championship Wrestling survived before closing its doors in July. The promotion featured the likes of The Hardy Boyz, Lita, and the Haas brothers before they became famous.

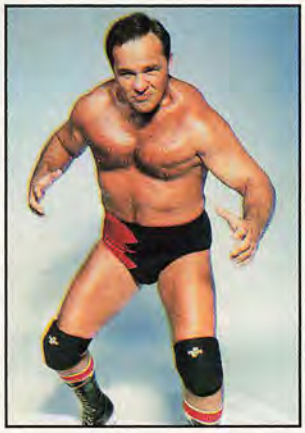
8 is the number of times The Dudley Boyz have held the WWE and Raw tag team titles since 2000, including twice in 2003. Counting their WCW and ECW tag title reigns, Buh Buh and D-Von are 17-time world tag team champions.

14 is the number of drug possession charges filed against Lex Luger (real name Lawrence Pfohl) after authorities reported finding more than 1,700 pills in his home in Cobb County, Georgia. Thirteen of those counts were felonies for possession of Xanax, OxyContin, anabolic steroids, testosterone, and hydrocodone.

42 is the length of Stacy Keibler's legs in inches, according to Keibler herself in WWE's *Divas Undressed* video.

60 is the number of days it took Kurt Angle to return to Smackdown following spinal surgery. Angle went under the knife just five days after WrestleMania XIX, but was back in the ring by early-June. Angle had previously suffered a broken neck prior to the 1996 Olympics, but went on to win a gold medal.

75 is the number of wrestlers who have had drug or alcohol problems that Steve Corino's personal ring announcer listed prior to Corino's October 25 Ring of Honor match against C.M. Punk in Spencerport, New York. The tactic was used to taunt Punk, who takes pride in living a "straight-edge" lifestyle and abstaining from drugs and alcohol. Punk responded with a list of more than 100 drugs he has never taken.



$650 was the asking price for a pair of "original wrestling boots" from Larry Zbyszko on eBay. The boots were described as being in "near-mint" condition and designed during his days as part of WCW's Dangerous Alliance. Zero was the number of bids as of press time.

1,729 is the number of days between Goldberg's loss of the WCW World title (to Kevin Nash at Starrcade 1998) and his winning the Raw title (from Triple-H at Unforgiven).

4,000 is the approximate number of fans that turned out to see Jeff Jarrett face Sting in a match to unify the NWA and WWA titles on May 25 in Auckland, New Zealand. Jarrett defeated Sting after interference from Joe E. Legend and Rick Steiner, as well as a guitar shot. The card was the finale of a three-day WWA tour of New Zealand and, apparently, the last WWA card.

7,800 is the approximate number of miles that Jeff Jarrett traveled to smash a guitar over Hulk Hogan's head following Hogan's win over Masa Chono in Tokyo in October.

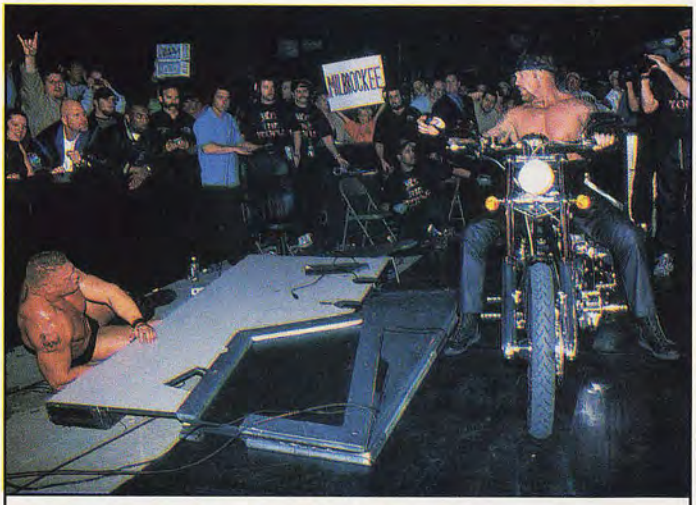
54,097 is the number of fans that attended WrestleMania XIX at Safeco Field in Seattle. The event drew a live gate of $2.76-million.

$100,000 is the value of the bounty that Triple-H placed on the head of Bill Goldberg. Batista collected it.

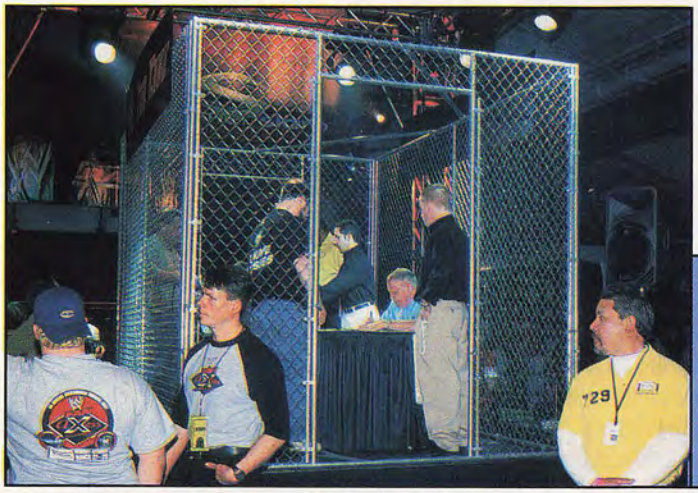
$125,000 is the amount of money earned by Luchador Dos Caras Jr. for his 46-second loss to shootfighter Mirko Cro Cop. That comes out to about $2,717.39 per second.

$13,000,000 (including legal fees) is the approximate total of Lewmar's Inc.'s court settlement with WWE. Lewmar manufactured the harness that Owen Hart wore on the night of his fatal fall from the rafters of Kemper Arena in Kansas City during a WWE pay-per-view in 1999.

THIS IS WHAT YOU CALL A SUPER-DUPER-DUPER-PLEX
Mr. Ooh La La looks a bit nervous about taking this five-man superplex, and who can blame him! Maybe he's wondering just how much weight one turnbuckle can handle before snapping.



EXCUSE ME, DO YOU KNOW THE WAY TO STURGIS?
The Undertaker shows that not all men are reluctant to ask for directions as he chats with Brock Lesnar at ringside. Or maybe Brock is looking to hitch a ride. That Harley would look cool with a sidecar.



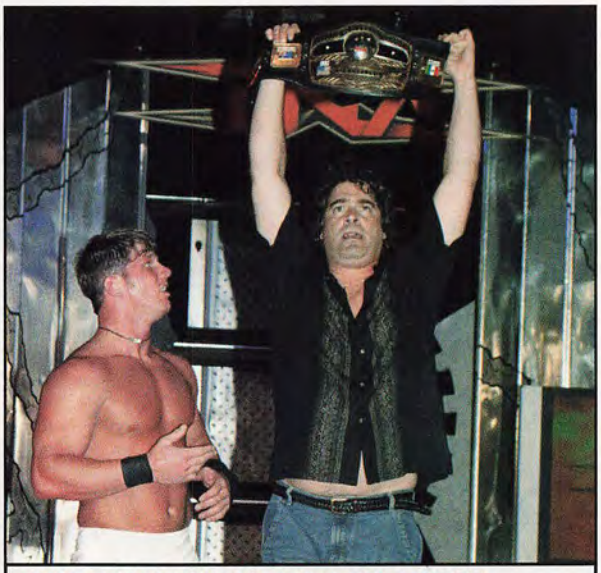
PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE REFEREE
Apparently, WWE feels the need to keep referee Earl Hebner locked in a cage when he's not officiating matches. Only when he is fed and properly sedated are fans allowed to approach and ask for autographs—and even then, three security guards are stationed outside, just in case.

SCARY MOMENT
WWE officials check on Brock Lesnar after he landed on his head while botching a shooting star press at WrestleMania. Lesnar's crash landing was frightening. He's lucky he didn't snap his neck on the move.

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

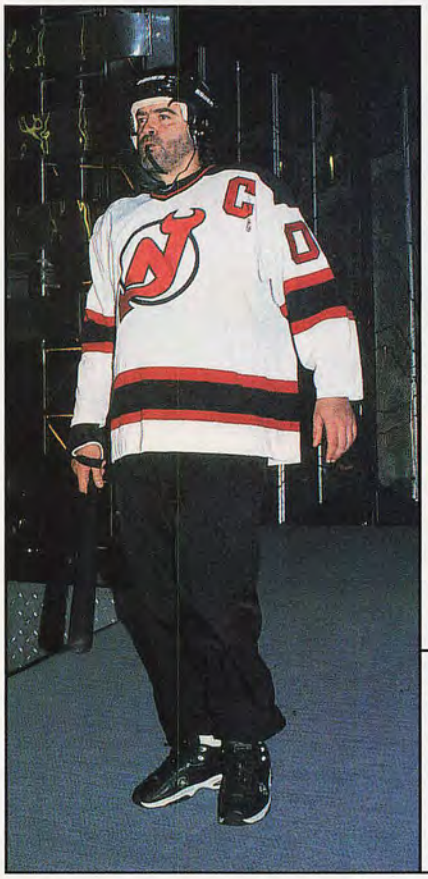
HARNESS THE POWER OF THE HULK, NEW JACK

Shark Boy and New Jack made for an odd, but extremely entertaining tandem in NWA-TNA. To Shark Boy, the Incredible Hulk hands were pretty hardcore, especially since they made "realistic Hulk sounds" when smashed together. New Jack actually found them pretty useful during TNA's hardcore Hard 10 Tournament.



NWA: TRADITION, COMPETITION, RUSSO

Quick, who's the NWA champion in this photo: the bewildered A.J. Styles (at left) or Vince Russo, the man holding the strap above his head? The correct answer would be Styles, but Russo never seemed to understand that. He often acted like he was the true heavyweight champion and Styles was merely his underling. Of course, Styles couldn't really complain. After all, Russo is a former WCW World champion.



MATT MORGAN COULD FOLLOW REFEREE ROBERT BRISCOE'S MATH LESSON UP TO THIS POINT, BUT THINGS BECAME MORE CONFUSING WHEN MORE FINGERS WERE ADDED

YOU'D BETTER HOPE SCOTT STEVENS DOESN'T FIND OUT YOU'VE BEEN RAIDING HIS LOCKER, VINCE

Vince Russo will still do anything he can to get heat from the fans in Nashville, but is there some sort of Predators-Devils NHL rivalry we don't know about? Nashville isn't what you'd call a hockey hotbed. Vince probably would have been better served ripping on the Tennessee Titans or on NASCAR.

"OF COURSE WE'RE CONCERNED—DOESN'T SHE SIGN THE PAYCHECKS?"

At least she did until October 19. Several WWE officials, as well as Linda McMahon, check on Stephanie McMahon's condition following her loss to her father at No Mercy. As per the prematch stipulations, Steph was forced to resign as Smackdown general manager. Why is it we have a feeling she'll be back?

"TO JOIN THE TRIBE, FIRST PLACE YOUR RIGHT HAND ON THIS MAN'S BUTT ..."

Prince Nana leads a ceremony to initiate Striker and Ace Darling into his family's Ashanti Tribe. Based on prior experience with Slick and Akeem, we always thought you needed fires in garbage cans and dancing winos to induct someone into your tribe. Maybe the Ashanti Tribe simply believes in rubbing a lucky rump to join.

WITH THE CEREMONIAL DANCE COMPLETE, VINNIE MAC LOOKS TO INDUCT A NEW MEMBER INTO HIS "KISS MY ASS" CLUB

We wonder why Vince keeps his little fraternity open. After all, a couple of years ago, The Rock made Vince kiss Rikishi's ass, which should have taught Vinnie Mac a valuable lesson about humiliating his employees. But this June, Vince demanded that Zach Gowen smooch his pasty nether regions. Gowen responded with a low blow, right in the famous McMahon grapefruits. That's what you get when you put your rear end on the line.

"ALAS, POOR BOOKER. I SQUASHED HIM WELL, SHAWN"

All right, we know that Triple-H is taunting Booker T, and maybe even considering a Hunter-roonie. But he *is* an aspiring actor now, and he does look like he's about to launch into a *Hamlet*-esque soliloquy. Hunter could be the next Kenneth Branagh!

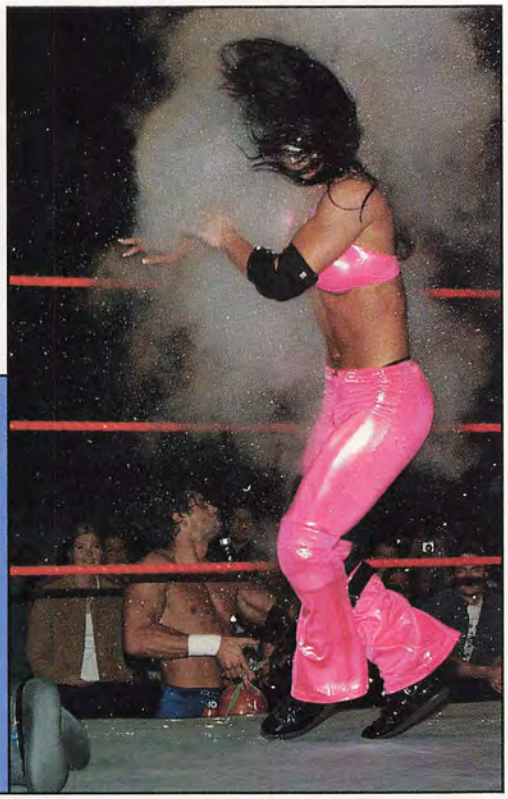
PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

CALLING CHILD SERVICES

Vince McMahon certainly wasn't afraid to get physical (and a little too physical for comfort at times) in his feud with his daughter, Stephanie. It really makes you wonder what it was like to grow up in the McMahon house. Couldn't you imagine Vince hitting a legdrop on little Shane when he refused to eat his vegetables?

EVERY FAN WHO WANTED JOE SAN TO PUT ON A PAIR OF PANTS HOPED SHINYA HASHIMOTO WOULD CONNECT WITH THIS HOOK KICK

He didn't, but Hashimoto still managed to defeat the thong-wearing shootfighter on this W-1 card in Japan. The next time someone tells you that Japanese *puroresu* is superior or more serious than American wrestling, be sure to remind him of Joe San, who wears the thong in every match. And people wonder why the wrestling business is down in Japan.



ANNOYED WITH VICTORIA'S CHAIN-SMOKING HABIT, STEVEN RICHARDS TAKES MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS

THEY SAY CATS SPRAY TO MARK THEIR TERRITORY

And Cheetah Master is no exception. Here, he pours a pitcher of urine onto his arch-rival in the ECWA, Prince Nana. Where the urine came from—or why Cheetah Master is carrying it around in a pitcher—well, we just don't want to know.

THE TWISTER OLYMPICS TAKES A NASTY TURN

"Fallen Angel" Christopher Daniels has Doug Williams tied up pretty nicely with a leg scissors from what we can tell. Or maybe Williams is working some kind of submission hold on Daniels' left leg. Or is that Williams' leg? Either way, someone must be in some serious pain. Either that or these are two very flexible wrestlers.

2004 SHOULD BE THEIR YEAR

Chris Sabin | Johnny Jeter | Alexis Laree | Morris | Sonjay Dutt

IN MEMORIAM

Duane Allen
Victor Almonte
Tony Altimore
Don "Ox" Anderson
Johnny Bellswinger
Freddie Blassie
Roy Bradbury
Zane Bresloff
Brother Icarus
Darlene Brown
Lila Cavazos
Hermano Corzo
"Bruiser" Brian Cox
Floyd Creachman
Corey Crimson
Shadito Cruz
Halcon Dorado II
Chip Douglas
Anthony "Pit Bull II" Durante
Axl Faulkner
Kodo Fuyuki
Giant Ochiai
Bruno Giovanni
Max Gold
The Great Antonio
Stu Hart
Curt Hennig
Mitsu Hirai
Crash Holly
Elizabeth Hulette
Dick Hutton
Dan "Bullwhip" Johnson
Buzz Jones
Les Kellet
Steve Logan
Malice
El Maton
Ray Mendoza
Moondog Spot
Naoto Morishita
Jackie Nichols
Sonny Reinhardt
Road Warrior Hawk
Joey Rossi
Stanley Sarbaneck
The Sheik
"Sailor" Art Thomas
Matt "The Gladiator" Verishine
Don Vitelli
Boris Volkoff
Kurt Von Poppenheim
Dan Walker
Kent Walton
Michiaki Yoshimura

JEFF JARRETT ON VINCE, HOGAN, TNA's FUTURE, MORE!
McMAHON vs. McMAHON
PLUS
What's Ahead For The Stars In 2004 • Ageless Flair & Dusty • Eric Angle's Plan
WHY TNA/NWA CAN'T AFFORD TO BE "CUTE"
THE RAW vs. SMACKDOWN SUPER BOWL PARTY
WWE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!
PLUS
YOUR 2003 RAW REPORT CARDS
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CARLY COLON
MONTH-BY-MONTH: THE YEAR IN REVIEW
WORLD BOXING
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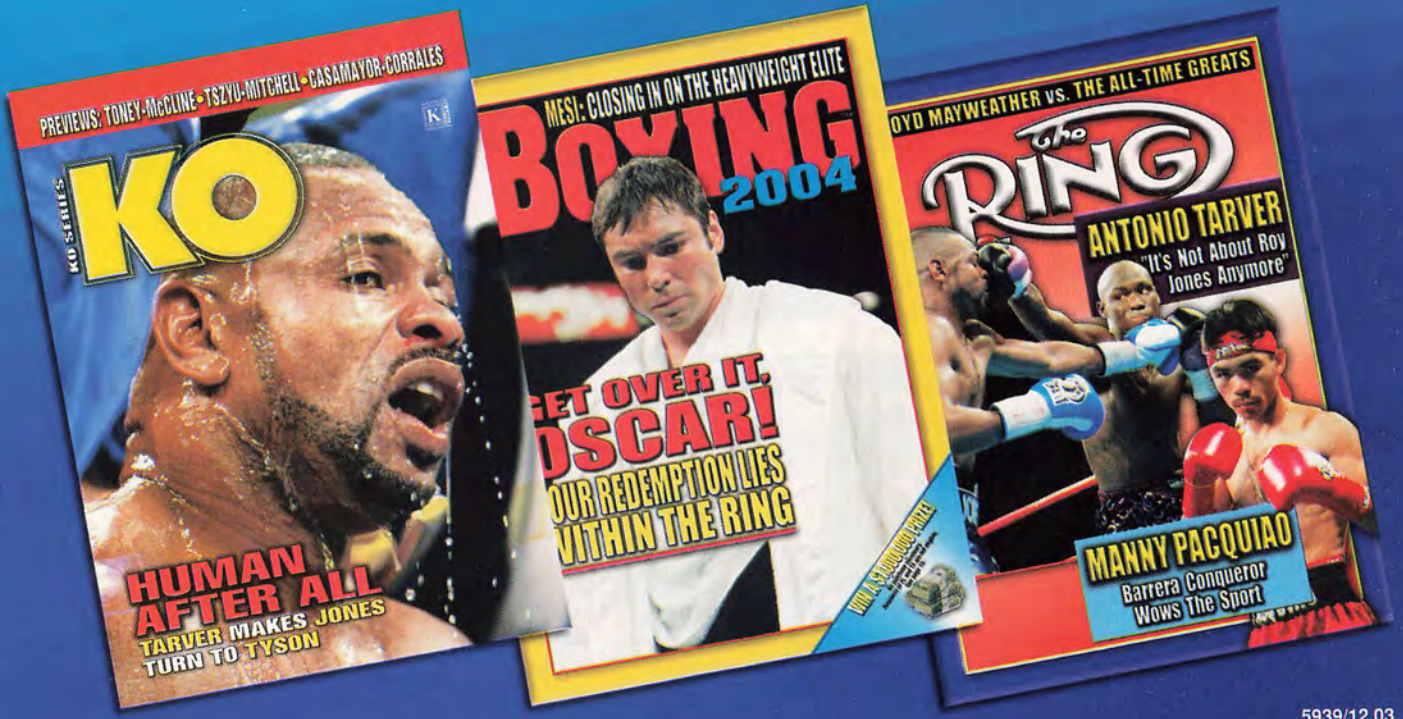

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THE FANS HAVE spoken, and Smackdown is on their minds.

WWE's Thursday night product thoroughly dominated the voting in the 2003 *PWI* Achievement Awards, winning nine of the 11 awards, including Wrestler, Tag Team, and Match of the Year.

The Smackdown brand's dominance comes as something of a surprise. Raw is the more established brand name, and the show of the same name was the ultimate winner in the all-important Monday night war between the WWF and WCW in the late-1990s. For years, *Raw* was considered the can't-miss show of the week. When WWE brought in Goldberg, Hulk Hogan, and the NWO, those former WCW headliners showed up first on *Raw*.

But if Smackdown was once seen as Raw's ugly stepsister, that perception clearly is fading away.

Since the brand extension in 2002, Smackdown has placed more of an emphasis on pure wrestling, featuring high-workrate matches over backstage skits and promos. Raw went the other way, concentrating on big names, dramatic storylines, and lengthy interview segments.

In some ways, the difference between Raw and Smackdown at the end of 2003 is a lot like the differences between WCW and WWE in 1999, with Smackdown/WWE featuring more up-tempo, athletic matches and Raw/WCW relying on older talent and more methodical matches.

Perhaps the fans who prefer Eddie Guerrero, Chris Benoit, and Kurt Angle over Triple-H, Kevin Nash, and Goldberg are the same fans who buy *PWI* and its sister publications, resulting in a bias in favor of the Smackdown brand among our respondents. Or perhaps the skew toward Smackdown has something to do with the fact that UPN—the network that carries the brand's flagship show—is available in more homes than Spike TV, which carries *Raw*. Maybe TV demographics have affected fans' viewing habits and preferences.

While those two factors probably had some effect on the voting, the biggest reason for Smackdown's dominance in the balloting seems to be that the fans simply preferred that brand over Raw. As far as the voters were concerned, Smackdown was the consistently better product.

It seems like two Smackdown feuds, in particular, captured the fans imagination: WWE chairman Vince McMahon against 20-year-old amputee Zach Gowen, and Kurt Angle vs. Brock Lesnar. Those two matchups alone accounted for seven of the 11 award winners. No storylines, personalities, or matches Raw presented could touch them.

Angle, in particular, was singled out for accolades this year. Not only did he win three singles Achievement Awards, he also was part of the Feud and Match of the Year. In fact, your Olympic hero was also involved in the top two runners-up in the Match category. When you add in ballots cast for matches that did not capture a runner-up spot, more than two-thirds of voters tagged an Angle bout for Match of the Year. That's one of the most impressive showings in any category in the 31-year history of these awards.

While WWE swept the 2003 Achievement Awards, NWA-TNA made some impressive showings. When you consider that TNA has just a fraction of the worldwide exposure of WWE, the fact that America's Most Wanted, A.J. Styles, Jeff Jarrett, Raven, and Trinity were able to snag runner-up spots is a significant accomplishment.

Of course, Ring of Honor has a relatively small, but passionate backing, particularly in the Match of the Year category. However, there wasn't a clear favorite among ROH voters, and that contingent split its vote among more than a half-dozen matches. While no ROH match was singled out with a runner-up spot, it speaks well of the overall quality of the ROH product that fans had so many Match of the Year candidates from which to choose.

Finally, the editors of *PWI* selected Bret Hart as the recipient of the 2003 Stanley Weston Award in honor of his lifetime achievements and contributions to the pro wrestling industry. Bret's brother Owen was posthumously honored with the same award in 1999. (By the way, don't miss a controversial, no-holds barred interview with Bret in the May 2004 edition of *The Wrestler,* on sale February 10).

Thank you to everyone who took the time to cast votes this year. Now, without any further ado, here are the selections for the best of the best of 2003.

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

WHO COULD POSSIBLY have predicted that a one-legged 20-year-old would become one of the hottest sensations in WWE in 2003?

Zach Gowen has defied the odds his whole life. He lost his left leg to cancer at the age of eight, but refused to give up on his dream of becoming a pro wrestler. He made national headlines in February when he (as Tenacious Z) upset B.G. James in an NWA-TNA contest, and he quickly captured the attention of WWE management.

Gowen took center stage at Judgment Day, preventing Vince McMahon from interfering in the Roddy Piper vs. Mr. America match, thus earning the enmity of the WWE chairman. To earn his coveted WWE contract, Gowen had to defeat The Big Show, a man who outweighed him by roughly 350 pounds.

Gowen won that match with considerable help from Kurt Angle and Brock Lesnar, establishing himself as the most unlikely WWE superstar ever.

Though Gowen nearly beat Vinnie Mac at Vengeance and scored a major victory over Matt Hardy at No Mercy, it's still hard to tell if he will be able to establish himself as a legitimate contender and not just a novelty act. While respondents were split on that question, many pointed out that questions about Gowen's future shouldn't obscure the fact that he had an incredible rookie year.

"What other rookie can say he was involved in a major program with Vince McMahon, Hulk Hogan, and Roddy Piper?" wrote Shannon Herbert of St. John's, Newfoundland. "Gowen was a big part of a few WWE pay-per-views. No matter how good Matt Morgan and Johnny Jeter might be in the future, Gowen had a better year in 2003. That's what this award is all about."

Not all voters were so kind, however.

"I have no problem with voting for Gowen for Inspirational Wrestler of the Year, but anyone who votes for him for Rookie of the Year ought to have his head examined," wrote Jim Graham of Ardmore, Pennsylvania. "Gowen's a one-trick pony. He'll be gone from WWE by this time next year!"

Luckily for Gowen, 2003 featured several promising prospects, but many honed their craft in OVW and NWA-TNA. Only Gowen made a major impact on a national stage. Those fans lucky enough to see other promising candidates in smaller promotions split their votes, allowing Gowen to take the top spot rather easily.

"This has been an incredible year," Gowen said, "and no matter what happens to me next year or the year after or whatever, I'll always cherish the memories I'll take from my time in WWE this year. But I do hope it's just the start of something special."

RUNNERS-UP

SYLVAN GRENIER [17 percent]

First runner-up: Even the snooty Frenchman had his supporters in the Rookie of the Year balloting. Grenier, who was trained by Rocky Johnson (Rock's father), went from developmental anonymity to WWE gold almost overnight, and proved capable of going toe-to-toe with The Dudley Boyz, Kane and Rob Van Dam, and Test and Scott Steiner. Grenier should become a major player in WWE again once he is fully recovered from injury in 2004.

TRINITY [14 percent]

Second runner-up: NWA-TNA's top diva has surpassed Lita as wrestling's most daring woman. When she concentrates on wrestling, she is one of the most innovative women in the sport. However, in recent months, Trinity has fallen into the role of valet, which likely hurt her in the balloting. The only other women to finish this high were Lita (2000), Sable (1998), Terri "Tori" Power (1991), and Madusa (1988), putting Trinity in some nice company.

MATT MORGAN [9 percent]

Third runner-up: The mammoth *Tough Enough 2* contender wouldn't let knee surgery sideline his dreams of stardom. Morgan spent most of 2003 in OVW before getting the callup to WWE in the fall. He instantly made waves on *Smackdown* when Paul Heyman introduced him and Nathan Jones as his bodyguards. Had Morgan made his WWE debut a few months earlier, he might have won Rookie of the Year honors. He was a victim of poor timing.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [28 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: Jonah Adelman, Bane, Matt Cappotelli, John Hennigan, Mark Magnus, and Bob Sapp.

ZACHCOWEN
[32 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

GOLF LEGEND JACK NICKLAUS once related a story about watching Secretariat coming down the home stretch of the 1973 Belmont Stakes. Secretariat pulled away from the pack, eventually crossing the finish line an astounding 31 lengths ahead of the second-place finisher to win the race in record time and horse racing's Triple Crown.

The fans in Belmont Park roared in appreciation, recognizing they had just seen a once-in-a-lifetime performance by a remarkable horse. And Nicklaus—who was watching on TV—suddenly realized he was on the floor of his living room. He had been pounding his fists into the carpet, lost in the moment, cheering as Secretariat raced into history. Tears were streaming down his cheeks, and he had no idea why. He just knew he had seen an athletic performance so inspirational that it was simply transcendent. All he could do was weep with joy.

For many of our respondents, the July 1 edition of *Smackdown* had a similar feel. That's when Gowen teamed with Stephanie McMahon to face The Big Show in a handicap match. Hanging in the balance was the WWE contract Gowen coveted.

Predictably, Show tossed the 155-pound Gowen around the ring like a rag doll in as big a mismatch as you'll see. Show ripped off Gowen's prosthetic leg and pounded the would-be WWE superstar with it.

But Gowen lived up to his old Tenacious Z nickname. Hopping across the ring on one leg, he desperately threw dropkicks and punches, briefly staggering the 500-pounder. It was the first time many fans saw Gowen attempt to wrestle on one leg. His courage and perseverance were incredible.

With help from Kurt Angle and Brock Lesnar, Gowen scored maybe the unlikeliest victory in WWE history, and made an impossible dream come true.

"I kept trying to call my girlfriend out to the TV to see this, but I couldn't speak. I had a lump in my throat," wrote Mikey Strauss of Columbus, Ohio. "The sheer determination of this kid to follow his dream and overcome the loss of a leg overwhelmed me. When he pinned Show, I actually cheered out loud."

"No matter how bad things are, you look at Zach Gowen, and you know you can overcome any obstacle in your way," wrote Kenya Williams of Toronto.

Gowen may not be the best athlete in WWE, and he almost certainly will never contend for a heavyweight title, but in just making it as far as he has already, he's a true inspiration.

"My ultimate goal is to help make a difference in someone's life," Gowen said. "I think that if you're on TV, you have a responsibility to use your fame for something positive. It's our responsibility to give something back to the community. If I can help one disabled person or cancer victim understand they can lead a happy and productive life, then I've done what I set out to do."

RUNNERS-UP

KURT ANGLE [30 percent]

First runner-up: Kurt Angle put far more on the line in his WrestleMania clash against Brock Lesnar than just the Smackdown title. He also risked his career, and his long-term health and well-being. Angle underwent surgery to repair damage to his vertebrae just weeks after 'Mania. Unlike others wrestlers who had suffered similar injuries, Angle tried an experimental procedure and was back in the ring in less than two months rather than a year. He essentially refused to be sidelined.

A.J. STYLES [15 percent]

Second runner-up: To WWE, A.J. Styles is the one that got away. Styles surprised a lot of people when he politely declined a WWE developmental offer because it would have disrupted his family life. Since making that bold decision, Styles has developed into one of the top wrestlers in the U.S. He held the NWA title for more than four months in '03 and will likely hold it again in the future. Styles still might make it to WWE someday, but it will be on his terms.

REY MISTERIO JR. [12 percent]

Third runner-up: If you're looking for inspiration, Smackdown seems to be the place to find it. Rey Misterio Jr. continued his winning ways and thrived in a promotion that traditionally favors sheer size over skill. The Luchador never backed down from the likes of A-Train, The Big Show, and other giants of WWE. Even after nearly being broken in half by Show, Misterio refused to be intimidated. He just went back to winning and dominating the cruiserweight division.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [10 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: Steve Austin, Booker T, Eddie Guerrero, The Hurricane, Brock Lesnar, Lita, and Ultimo Dragon.

INSPIRATIONAL WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

ZACH GOWEN
[33 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

THE FORMER PROTOTYPE traded in his bleached-blond hair and surfer dude looks for a makeover right out of *8 Mile*—and boy did it pay off!

Last year, Cena was earning praise as OVW's top dog. He debuted on WWE TV in memorable fashion, nearly upsetting Kurt Angle an in impromptu challenge match on *Smackdown*. But with his plain trunks and generic offense, Cena didn't quite capture the fans' attention.

So Cena let some of his own personality shine through. He let his talent for freestyle rapping come to the forefront and started dressing in loose-fitting urban-style gear. He also packed on some extra muscle mass. And once the new Cena got his hands on the microphone, there was no turning back.

But the image change alone didn't propel Cena toward the top of the Smackdown roster. He didn't get a match at WrestleMania, and that perceived snub prompted him to get a little more aggressive. He acquitted himself well in post-'Mania title matches with Brock Lesnar, but he could not score the elusive pinfall. Subsequent feuds with Chris Benoit and The Undertaker also yielded precious few wins.

Credit Cena's comprehensive training under Danny Davis and Jim Cornette in OVW for some of his success in 2003. It was during his stay in OVW that Cena learned how to use losses to his advantage. Once in OVW, Cena was upset by David Flair. That embarrassed him to a point at which he did everything in his power to make sure it never happened again. He recommitted himself to his training, learned the importance of never underestimating an opponent, and sharpened his focus.

Today, Cena appears ready for a main event run. Any man who can hoist the massive Big Show up for an FU—as Cena did at Survivor Series—deserves main event consideration.

Cena received a major boost in the balloting following his refusal to join Team Lesnar and his acceptance by Team Angle prior to Survivor Series. Once Cena turned his blistering raps against the likes of Lesnar, A-Train, and Show, fans couldn't vote for him fast enough.

"I didn't care much for Cena until recently, but I have to acknowledge he's come a long way this year," wrote Dan Dobson of Tulsa, Oklahoma. "I used to think Cena was nothing but a poor man's Eminem. Now he's proving he's a serious wrestler. I could even see him wearing the Smackdown belt soon."

Cena had a different reaction to the award.

"You say I'm improved, I say I'm on top. I've always been the smoothest, the cream of the crop. You give me an award, you hand me a plaque. Yo, that's only natural, 'cause I'm the monster mack."

Word.

RUNNERS-UP

MATT HARDY [19 percent]

First runner-up: It's official—Matt Hardy was not the weak link of the Hardy Boyz tag team. Most fans pegged brother Jeff as the breakaway singles star, especially after he upset Triple-H for the Intercontinental title in 2001. Some even said Matt was the Marty Jannetty to Jeff's Shawn Michaels, meaning he would fade away after the team split up. Wrong! With a dollop of Mattitude, Matt became one of the most entertaining stars in WWE in 2003.

SHELTON BENJAMIN & CHARLIE HAAS [16 percent]

Second runners-up: In 2002, Benjamin and Haas were developmental talents looking for an occasional dark match in WWE. Last year, they were two-time Smackdown tag team champs. The amateur standouts made a very impressive transition from the mats to the indies and on to WWE glory. They're probably the best team in the promotion, and were involved terrific matches with Los Guerreros, Chris Benoit and Rhyno, and a handful of other duos.

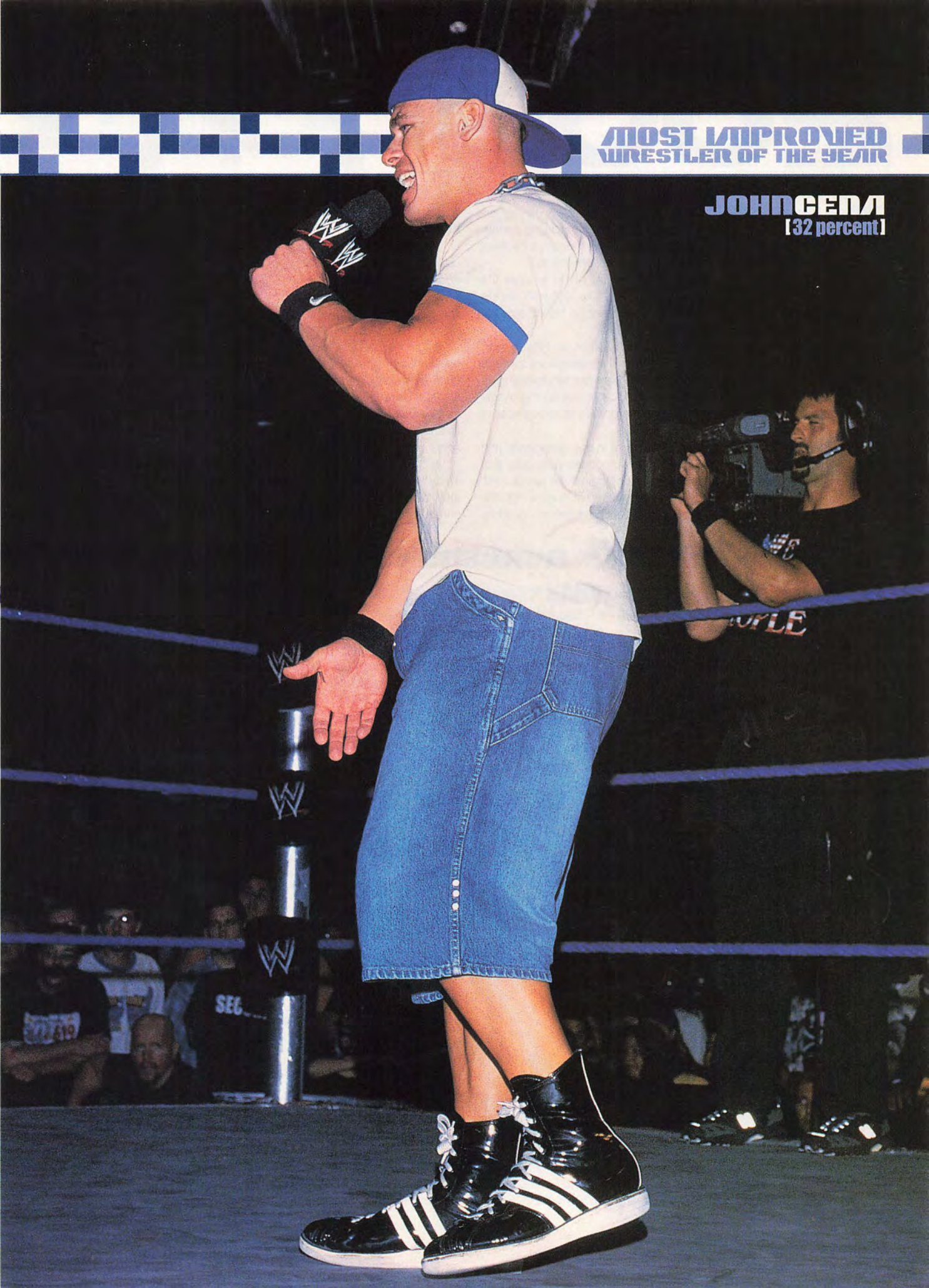
VICTORIA [11 percent]

Third runner-up: It wasn't long ago that Victoria was watching WWE on TV and laughing off the notion that she'd be involved in a WrestleMania someday. Well, not only was she involved in WrestleMania XIX, but she made her 'Mania debut as women's champ. That's a step up from being Doug Basham's valet in OVW. "I think Victoria was the key ingredient in the renaissance the WWE women's division saw in 2002," wrote Sean Kelly of Lincoln, Nebraska.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [22 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: America's Most Wanted, Rob Conway, Gail Kim, Brock Lesnar, Paul London, Rodney Mack, C.M. Punk, Chris Sabin, and Sonny Siaki.

MOST IMPROVED WRESTLER OF THE YEAR



JOHN CENA
[32 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

THE DIAGNOSIS WAS two herniated disks pressing against his spinal cord. Doctors said that Kurt Angle would be risking permanent spinal injury, paralysis, and possibly even death if he went ahead with his match against Brock Lesnar at WrestleMania XIX.

Whether he was being courageous or foolish, Angle ignored the warnings and stepped into the ring at WrestleMania XIX with severe neck pain and less than 25 percent of normal strength in his left arm. He lost the match, but he and Lesnar delivered a classic.

Several other wrestlers (including Steve Austin, Lita, Rhyno, and Edge) have suffered injuries similar to Angle's. Those wrestlers average about a year out of the ring, recovering from surgery and rehabilitating. In some cases, the vertebrae fusion surgery could be career-ending. Angle got his start in pro wrestling later in life and didn't want to miss a year of his prime or be forced into early retirement.

Dr. Hae-Dong Jho read about Angle's plight in the newspaper and contacted him with a second option. Dr. Jho proposed a surgery that would remove the portion of each disk pressing against the spinal cord, rather than removing the entire disk, and fusing a part of Angle's hipbone into the two adjoining disks. This procedure would postpone the need for traditional vertebrae fusion surgery for at least a few years, allowing Angle to get back in the ring in short order.

Angle underwent the procedure on April 4. He returned to *Smackdown* in early-June. Basically, he returned from a career-threatening injury faster than some NFL running backs return from sprained ankles!

"You have to give him credit for being brave enough to risk so much just to get back in the ring sooner," wrote Dan Hoffman of Ridgeway, Ontario. "This guy really has to love competing."

Angle was back so quickly that many fans didn't realize the severity of his injury in the first place. His neck injury wasn't discussed on TV quite as much as some other wrestlers' injuries. That was what Angle wanted. He wanted to focus on recovery, not the injury itself. Because of that relative lack of attention, Angle didn't run away with this honor. Respondents split the vote fairly evenly among several wrestlers, but Angle had enough support to finish on top.

"I can't see the logic in voting for anyone other than Angle," wrote Tracy Wrazien of Hidalgo, Texas. "This wasn't just a guy coming back after taking a couple of years off. It was a man who risked his life so he barely had to leave at all. How can anyone compete with that?"

RUNNERS-UP

BILL GOLDBERG [16 percent]

First runner-up: "Da Man" silenced a lot of critics and proved he has what it takes to succeed in WWE. It had been two years since Goldberg competed in WCW, and other than a few matches in Japan, he had mostly avoided wrestling. Many experts thought that the ring rust—combined with WWE's hectic schedule—would be too much for him to handle. The experts were wrong, as Goldberg vanquished The Rock and went on to take Triple-H's Raw title.

RAVEN [13 percent]

Second runner-up: After a lackluster run in WWE, Raven's career appeared to be on a downswing. Instead, Raven proved his naysayers wrong and became the focal point of NWA-TNA, helping that company make it through a rocky year. Not only is Raven one of the most popular wrestlers outside WWE, he's one of the most in-demand stars on the independent circuit. WWE's loss was a huge gain for TNA and its fans.

ULTIMO DRAGON [11 percent]

Third runner-up: Botched elbow surgery in 1998 was supposed to have ended Ultimo Dragon's career. Instead, one of the most decorated technicians in *puroresu* and Lucha Libre pulled off a comeback in the world's largest promotion. Unfortunately, WWE matchmakers have done little to promote this legend, and many younger fans are unaware of his exploits in Japan and WCW. Regardless, his against-the-odds comeback deserves praise.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [38 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: Batista, D-Lo Brown, Justin Credible, Hulk Hogan, Kenta Kobashi, Lita, Kevin Nash, Randy Orton, Rhyno, Sable, Scott Steiner, and The Undertaker.

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR

KURT ANGLE
[22 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

THE NEXT TIME someone challenges Trish Stratus' claim to being WWE's top diva, all she has to do is show them her two incredible ... *PWI* Achievement Awards.

That's right, Trish Stratus is the first woman in the four-year history of our Woman of the Year Award to win in consecutive years. Making this year's honor even more special is the fact that Trish was battling perhaps the most impressive crop of women wrestlers in WWE history. Trish held off the returning Jazz, ultimately got the best of Victoria, and dominated Molly Holly and Gail Kim. Even after Lita's return from a broken neck, Stratus is still widely considered to be the most important figure in the WWE women's division.

We've written it before, and we're sure we'll do so again, but it's hard to believe that Trish once was considered nothing more than eye candy. She continues to improve her wrestling skills, and more often than not, she delivers one of the most exciting matches on the card when she performs. The fact that she's beautiful doesn't hurt her appeal, either.

Trish actually received more votes from females than any other woman in the running, largely because she is more than just a scantily clad Barbie doll.

"Trish may have a very good body, but there's much more to her than just looks," wrote Jenna Douglas of Madison, Wisconsin. "She's not afraid to stand up and fight against anyone. She never backed down from Jazz when it seemed like every other woman in WWE was hiding from her. She stood up to the challenge and came out on top. That makes Trish a winner in my book ... again."

Many of the voters mentioned the fact that Trish won the WrestleMania triple-threat match against Jazz and Victoria as proof of her dominance in the women's division. Others pointed out that Trish has stood the test of time and remains a consistently integral part of Raw storylines, while divas such as Ivory, Torrie, Dawn Marie, and Stacy seem to receive uneven pushes. Trish has star power *and* staying power.

However, Stratus didn't win her second Woman of the Year in a landslide. Lita got an impressive number of votes following her return in October, perhaps taking away from some of the runners-up. It will be interesting to see if Trish can continue her dominance in a year when Jazz, Victoria, and Lita all remain healthy. While that may be a challenge, the odds are in her favor.

"Lita wrote a really good autobiography, Torrie was a *Playboy* centerfold, and I'm *still* voting for Trish," wrote Rob Neunan of Worcester, Massachusetts. "Trish always seems to be enjoying herself, whether she's wrestling or posing on a photo shoot. Her enthusiasm is infectious, and once again, she's getting my vote."

RUNNERS-UP

STEPHANIE McMAHON (29 percent)

First runner-up: For the third straight year, Stephanie McMahon takes the top runner-up spot. Last year, Steph took 24 percent of the vote for guiding Chris Jericho to the main event of WrestleMania and establishing a wrestling-based focus for *Smackdown*. This year, a wiser and kinder Steph comes in at number two as well. And she's finally earning respect. "For once, Stephanie stood up to her daddy," wrote Adam Manz of Jacksonville, Florida. "Her courage should be admired."

VICTORIA (11 percent)

Second runner-up: WWE's resident madwoman further established herself as a dangerous force in 2003. She may be the most powerful woman wrestler WWE has seen since Chyna, but she's also skilled in technical wrestling, brawling, and even moves off the ropes. "A vote for Victoria for Woman of the Year is a vote for women's *wrestling,* not a beauty pageant—though Victoria is quite beautiful!" wrote Craig Stachowicz of Glens Falls, New York. "She's gorgeous and intimidating at the same time!"

TORRIE WILSON (10 percent)

Third runner-up: Let's be honest—other than bikini contests and catfights, Torrie Wilson didn't do much in the ring in 2003. However, the fact that she was a *Playboy* cover girl was good enough to pace her to a fourth-place finish. Voters noted that Torrie received more mainstream publicity than any other woman in wrestling—including Stephanie and Linda McMahon—and felt that alone qualified her for Woman of the Year. Maybe if the teased feud between Torrie and Sable ever developed, she'd have finished higher.

VOTES FOR OTHERS (14 percent)

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: Dawn Marie, Jackie Gayda, Molly Holly, Jazz, Stacy Keibler, Gail Kim, Alexis Laree, Linda McMahon, Nidia, Sable, Shaniqua, and Trinity.

TRISHSTRATUS
[36 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

USUALLY, WRESTLEMANIA IS the event at which feuds are settled. After 'Mania, the big winners move on to bigger and better things, and the losers regroup and try to figure out where they went wrong.

That wasn't the case with the animosity between Kurt Angle and Brock Lesnar. WrestleMania was more like a starting point for the heated feud that consumed Smackdown for the rest of 2003.

The battle between the gargantuan NCAA champion and the Olympic gold medalist was perhaps the most intriguing matchup in WrestleMania history. Angle taunted Lesnar in the weeks prior to the event, always teasing that the match could take place on free TV. It did—sort of—as a switcheroo by Eric Angle, Kurt's brother, resulted in a quick pin by Kurt on *Smackdown,* but that little incident could hardly be called a match. It did, however, make fans more anxious than ever to see the match take place on the sport's grandest stage.

Sensing the significance of the match (and perhaps letting professional pride get the best of him), Angle banished Shelton Benjamin and Charlie Haas from ringside and the two treated the fans to a gritty, suplex-filled battle. Lesnar survived a missed shooting star press but connected with an F5 to seal the victory. But that wasn't the end of the war.

Angle and Lesnar formed an alliance based on respect once Angle returned from neck surgery, and Angle regained the title in a three-way match with Lesnar and The Big Show at Vengeance. That's when Lesnar showed his true character, turning against Angle and joining forces with his arch-rival, Big Show.

To finally settle the matter, Lesnar and Angle squared off in a 60-minute "Ironman" match on September 16. Once again, Lesnar emerged victorious, besting Angle by a margin of five falls to four. Yet even after going 60 minutes, the Lesnar-Angle feud did not have a decisive winner or really settle the matter at all, as time ran out with Angle seemingly on the verge of getting a tapout from the anklelock.

By the time Survivor Series rolled around, Lesnar and Angle were still arch-enemies, leading teams of five against each other in the latest chapter of the rivalry.

"Maybe it's their pride in their amateur backgrounds or maybe it's just an ego thing, but when Angle and Lesnar get in the ring together, the intensity just skyrockets," wrote Brett Johnson of Denton, Texas.

"When most matches start to run long, you see the wrestlers resorting to punches and kicks. Angle and Lesnar fall back on amateur takedowns and mat wrestling," wrote Amit Chutay of Greece, New York. "Angle and Lesnar get *better* the longer the match goes. I could watch those guys wrestle every night and not get tired of it."

RUNNERS-UP

HULK HOGAN vs. VINCE McMAHON [19 percent]

First runner-up: Their WrestleMania showdown was billed as "a match 20 years in the making," and in terms of sheer ferocity, it didn't disappoint. The feud between former friends/colleagues continued after that bloody bout when Hogan donned a hood (as Mr. America) and flaunted Vince's banishment. However, the feud might have gotten too personal. Hogan vanished from Smackdown before it could play out further. Maybe Vince and Hulk really can't work together anymore.

STEVE AUSTIN vs. ERIC BISCHOFF [12 percent]

Second runner-up: Another feud pitting wrestler against executive. Austin and Bischoff's game of oneupsmanship defined Raw for 2003. Austin beat Bischoff at No Way Out and humiliated him in the redneck triathalon at Bad Blood, but Bischoff drove "Stone-Cold" crazy by preventing him from getting physically involved with the wrestlers. Bischoff has won this award twice: last year (vs. Stephanie McMahon) and in 1996 (vs. Vince during the height of the Monday night war).

JEFF JARRETT vs. RAVEN [10 percent]

Third runner-up: Raven was a man with a purpose again when he debuted in NWA-TNA early in '03. In arguably the best physical condition of his life, he was a near-lock to win the NWA title. The only person standing in his way was Jeff Jarrett. The Jarrett-Raven war was the most explosive in TNA's brief history, and it brought out the best in both men. Raven still has yet to wear the NWA crown, and Jarrett has silenced many critics and proven to be a deserving champ.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [23 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters that did not capture a runner-up spot include: Kurt Angle vs. Chris Benoit, The Big Show vs. Brock Lesnar, Booker T vs. Christian, Booker T vs. Triple-H, Bill Goldberg vs. Triple-H, Triple-H vs. Kevin Nash, Chris Jericho vs. Shawn Michaels, Kane vs. Shane McMahon, Stephanie McMahon vs. Vince McMahon, C.M. Punk vs. Raven, and Scott Steiner vs. Test.

KURT ANGLE vs. BROCK LESNAR

[36 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

YOUR LOVE-HATE relationship with your Olympic hero continues. Last year, Angle was voted second runner-up in the Most Hated Wrestler category. In 2001, Angle became the first wrestler in the history of these Achievement Awards to finish in the top four in both Most Hated (second runner-up) and Most Popular (third runner-up) balloting. Obviously, the fans and Kurt have a pretty complex relationship.

This year, Angle made it easy for everyone to get behind him. It all started at WrestleMania XIX. Prior to the match, word got out that Angle was had suffered a career-threatening neck injury. The doctors said he was risking paralysis by facing Brock Lesnar at 'Mania, before having major surgery, but Angle went through with the match anyway.

Fortunately, the minimally invasive surgery that Angle ultimately chose to have—an experimental procedure—was a success, and he was back in the ring within a few months rather than a full year. When he returned, Angle was a new man. He fired Shelton Benjamin and Charlie Haas from Team Angle. He stood up to Lesnar and recaptured the Smackdown title in a three-way with Brock and The Big Show. For the first sustained period of his career, Angle truly wrestled in accordance with the three principles he always espoused: intelligence, intensity, *and* integrity.

On top of that, fans could count on Angle to deliver exciting matches on a nightly basis. In fact, Angle was not only part of this year's Match of the Year winner, but the top two runner-up matches in that category as well. Only Shawn Michaels in his prime consistently delivered the type of spectacular matches Angle puts on.

"Now that The Rock is gone and Steve Austin seems to be retired, Kurt Angle is WWE's true franchise player," wrote John Germano of Lima, Ohio. "He'll put everything on the line for the fans, for WWE, and for himself. You can't help but admire that type of dedication and intestinal fortitude."

While Angle's supporters were solidly in his corner, he received the lowest percentage of votes of any Achievement Award winner in 2003. Angle clearly benefited from Hulk Hogan's departure from WWE, Austin's inactivity (as a wrestler), and Lesnar's heel turn. While respondents split their Most Popular votes over a variety of competitors, only Angle was one of the few to enjoy main event prominence throughout the year. In other words, Angle filled a void at the top of the card.

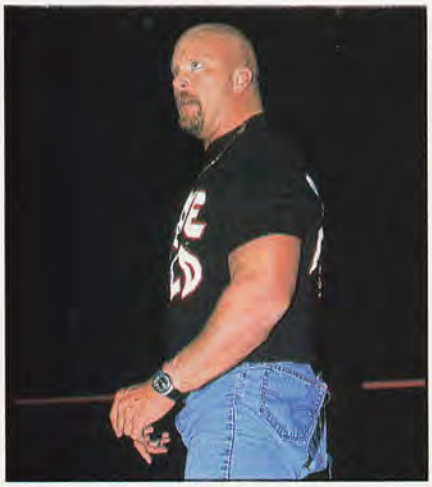
"What's not to like about him?" asked Jennifer Potts of Huntsville, Alabama. "He's an incredible wrestler, a fantastic talker, and a wonderful all-around performer. No one else in wrestling has his combination of pure charisma and natural talent."

Your Olympic hero is 2003's Most Popular Wrestler. Whether he'll be beloved or despised in 2004 is anyone's guess.

RUNNERS-UP

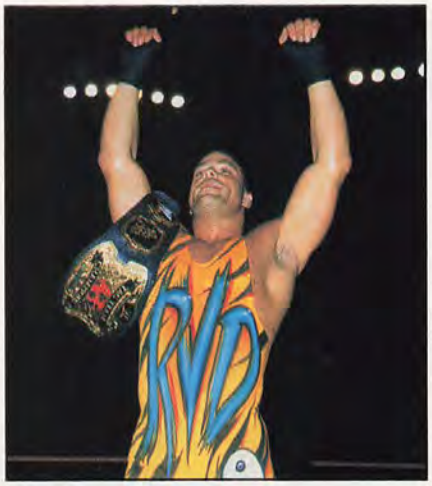
STEVE AUSTIN [18 percent]

First runner-up: From 1997 to 2000, "Stone-Cold" was arguably the most popular wrestler in WWE history, yet only once during that time did Austin win Most Popular honors. After his 2001 heel run and his abrupt departure from WWE last year, fans clearly wanted to adore Austin all over again. Unfortunately, his WrestleMania clash with The Rock this year might have been his final match. As Raw co-GM, Austin had a limited role, but people still couldn't get enough of him.



ROB VAN DAM [16 percent]

Second runner-up: The 2001 and 2002 Most Popular winner has fallen on hard times. While RVD still has his rabid supporters, he was, unfortunately, stuck on a treadmill for most of the year. Van Dam spent a good portion of the year teaming with Kane, and then winning and losing the I-C title. Even his most ardent defenders are starting to admit that RVD has probably gone as far as he will ever go in WWE, but that doesn't make him much less popular.



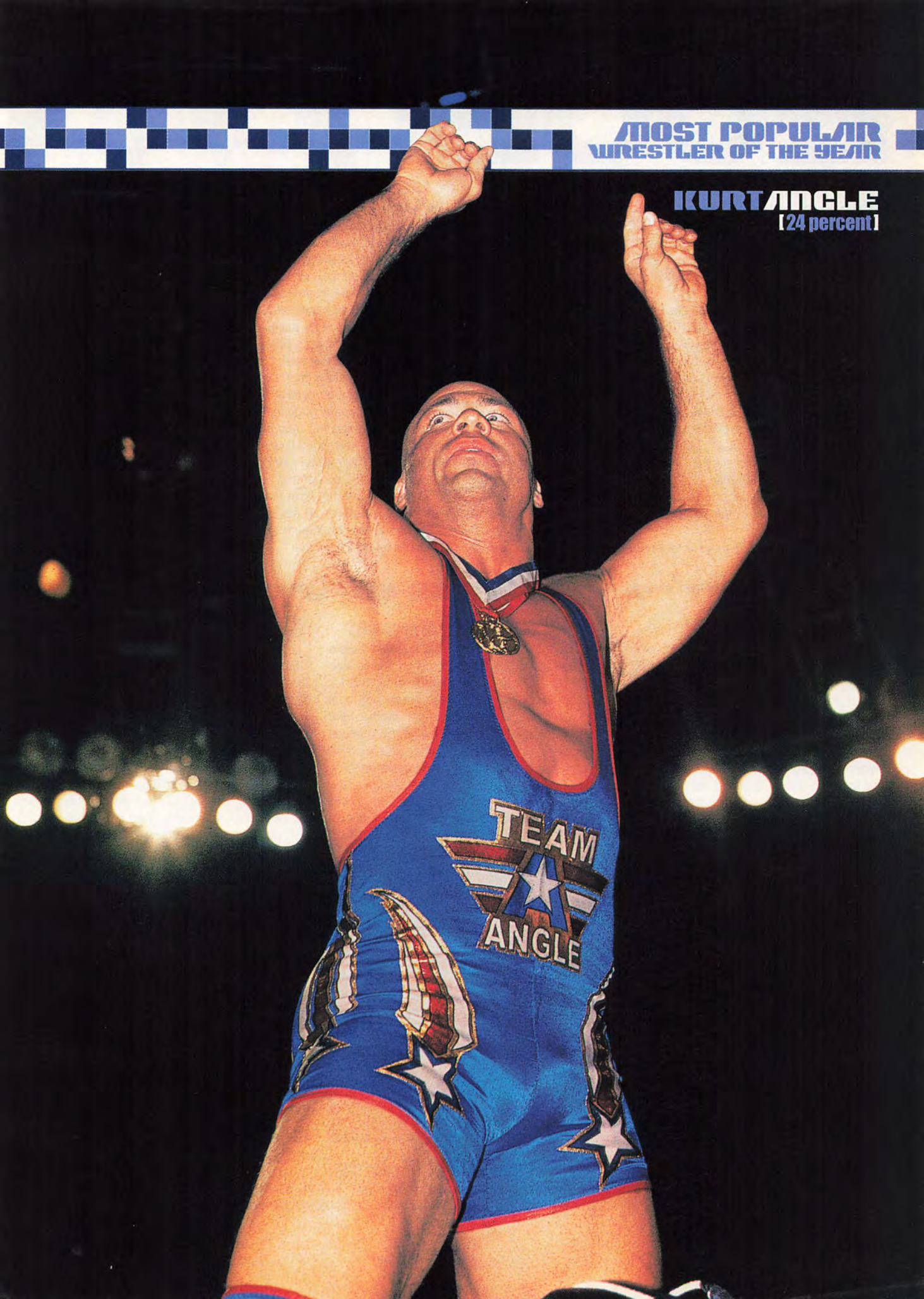
REY MISTERIO JR. [8 percent]

Third runner-up: The "King Of Mystery" continues to impress as wrestling's consummate underdog, but he really shouldn't be perceived that way any longer. Everyone knows he's capable of pulling off upsets over anyone—just ask The Big Show. Plus he continues to be the standard by which all other cruiserweights are measured. "I tape *Smackdown* every week to make sure I don't miss the next insane move Misterio pulls off. He's a marvel," wrote Eric Somers of Portland, Maine.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [34 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: Chris Benoit, Booker T, John Cena, Bill Goldberg, Zach Gowen, Eddie Guerrero, Hulk Hogan, Shawn Michaels, Raven, Trish Stratus, and The Undertaker.

MOST POPULAR WRESTLER OF THE YEAR



KURT ANGLE
[24 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

THE PEOPLE HAVE spoken, and to no one's surprise, they don't have many nice things to say about "The Cerebral Assassin."

More than two out of every five ballots received named Triple-H the most hated man in wrestling. Frankly, given all the negative opinions expressed about him on the Internet, we thought he'd receive an even higher percentage of the votes.

Respondents gave a litany of reasons as to why they despise the former Raw champion. Many accused him of ducking worthy contenders and using his backstage influence to protect his spot at the top of the card. Others said the quality of his matches has slipped since 2000 and complained that he has become too reliant on Evolution—and his ever-present sledgehammer—to stay at the top.

And others, like Jamey Meyers of Meadville, Pennsylvania, said Hunter Hearst Helmsley is simply the man wrestling fans love to hate.

"Triple-H is a great villain," Meyers wrote. "People said the days of good guys and bad guys were a thing of the past, and everyone was a shade of gray. Then a guy like Triple-H comes around, and people absolutely hate him with a passion. As far as personality goes, Triple-H is the closest thing we have to the second coming of Ric Flair, jacked up to 21st century standards."

Triple-H, no doubt, learned a lot about how to infuriate fans from Flair, who earned the dubious distinction of Most Hated Wrestler twice in his career. But the fans hated Flair's wrestling character. With Triple-H, people seem to have developed a powerful personal dislike for the man himself. And that loathing has something to do with his relationship with his new bride, Stephanie McMahon.

"I don't know exactly how much power Helmsley got as a result of his relationship with Stephanie," wrote Benny Smith of Modesto, California, "but it has to be a pretty decent amount. If he and Vince's daughter weren't a couple, I have to believe he'd be a little lower in the pecking order on Raw than he is now. I think a lot of people would want to see other guys get pushed on Raw anyway, but considering the circumstances, this gives them reason to hate him so much more."

Smith's sentiment matched that of a number of respondents. It seems like anything the fans don't like about WWE—or the state of wrestling today—they somehow manage to tie to Triple-H.

Of course, Triple-H has a different explanation.

"Jealousy, pure and simple," he said. "I'm the most dominant wrestler in the world today. I'm Hollywood's next leading man. And the ladies worship me. Of course all the beer-guzzling simpletons hate me. As far as I'm concerned, this means I'm doing a lot right—not that I needed a bunch of idiots to tell me that."

RUNNERS-UP

KANE [19 percent]

First runner-up: Believe it or not, we expected Kane to mellow out once he took off the mask. Obviously, that hasn't happened. "The Big Red Machine" has become the most sadistic force in wrestling. He turned his back on Rob Van Dam, tombstoned Linda McMahon, and seemingly delighted in coming up with new ways to torture Shane McMahon—even going so far as to attack Shane in his hospital bed. "There's no place for that madman in wrestling," wrote Ted Tracy of Lockport, New York. We can't disagree.

VINCE McMAHON [17 percent]

Second runner-up: In a nutshell, here's Vince McMahon's 2003 lesson on how to lose friends and gain Most Hated votes: Start a blood feud with Hulk Hogan, berate and beat up a one-legged man, have yet another very public affair with a gorgeous underling, refuse to come to your wife's aid when she is physically assaulted, beat up your daughter on PPV, and promise to end The Undertaker's career. Are we forgetting anything? Probably. There are so many reasons for hating Vince that's it's hard to keep them straight.

TEST [8 percent]

Third runner-up: You just can't treat Stacy Keibler like garbage unless you're looking to finish high on the Most Hated list. The relationship between Stacy and Test was scary at times, as Test repeatedly threatened, demeaned, and even assaulted the dainty diva. For many fans, the fireworks between the two seemed a little too real. Many wanted Scott Steiner to seriously injure Test (before Steiner turned heel), while others just wanted Test to go away. "Get that bucktoothed buffoon off my TV!" pleaded Susan O'Brien of Memphis.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [15 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: A-Train, The Big Show, Eric Bischoff, Christian, Shane Douglas, Jeff Jarrett, Chris Jericho, Kid Kash, La Resistance, Brock Lesnar, Randy Orton, and Vince Russo.

MOST HATED WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

TRIPLE H
[41 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

THE 60-MINUTE "Ironman" match between Brock Lesnar and Kurt Angle was special for so many reasons.

Not only did this epic encounter pit the man who would be voted 2003 Wrestler of the Year against the 2002 Wrestler of the Year (and first runner-up this year) in a rematch of the main event of WrestleMania XIX. Not only did it run a full hour and show Angle and Lesnar are about as evenly matched as two wrestlers can be (with Angle only seconds away from scoring a tying fifth fall).

For the first time in WWE, an "Ironman" world title match aired on free TV. In an era in which viewers are only a click away from hundreds of entertainment options, Angle and Lesnar proved that wrestling fans can still enjoy longer, methodically paced matches. At a time when the phrase "sports entertainment" is thrown around too often, Lesnar and Angle proved that *pro wrestling* is still alive and well, and that fans are hungry to see it.

Lesnar took Angle's Smackdown title at WrestleMania. Angle regained the gold at Vengeance. But after Angle successfully defended the title against Lesnar at SummerSlam, Lesnar turned against Angle, setting the stage for this showdown.

Lesnar set the tone early, bailing out of the ring and stalling to frustrate Angle. At the nine-minute mark, Lesnar brought a chair into the ring and smashed it into Angle's skull, giving Angle the first fall by DQ.

But it was part of an intelligent strategy. With Angle weakened, Lesnar hit him with an F5 to even the falls at one apiece. Lesnar then took the upper hand, scoring a second fall courtesy of the anklelock.

Angle rallied with a series of suplexes, but at about the 20-minute mark, Lesnar connected with an F5 on the ringside floor. Angle was counted out, and Lesnar went up 3-1.

The Olympic hero would not be denied. Angle scored a pinfall after hitting Lesnar with a superplex, but Lesnar responded quickly, taking advantage of a woozy referee and hitting Angle with the title belt, putting the count at 4-2.

Angle brought out the high-risk offense at that point, but Lesnar went up 5-2 after a stiff superplex. Things looked bleak for Angle until the champ caught Lesnar with yet another superplex at the 51-minute mark, and then scored a fall via submission at the 56-minute mark. The crowd rallied behind Angle, and the Olympian went to work on the challenger. With a minute remaining, Angle trapped Lesnar in the anklelock again. Miraculously, Lesnar strained and refused to tap. When time ran out, Lesnar was the new champ, albeit just barely.

"I'll tell my grandkids about this match," wrote Mike Strasser of Yakima, Washington.

RUNNERS-UP

CHRIS BENOIT vs. KURT ANGLE [23 percent]

First runner-up: Angle and Benoit were so familiar with each other that this Royal Rumble match was like a game of human chess, with the two of them constantly countering each other. Benoit seemed to have the title in his grasp, but Angle rolled out of the crossface and eventually caught Benoit in an anklelock. After Benoit finally tapped, both were given a loud standing ovation—an ovation that continued for Benoit two days later at a *Smackdown* taping.

BROCK LESNAR vs. KURT ANGLE [17 percent]

Second runner-up: It's a true credit to Angle that he was part of the top three vote-getters in the Match of the Year category. This match got significant attention both because it was the main event of WrestleMania and because Angle wrestled with a serious neck injury. Lesnar showed his determination by winning the match after crashing head-first on a missed shooting star press in what was one of the scariest moments in 'Mania history.

SHAWN MICHAELS vs. CHRIS JERICHO [12 percent]

Third runner-up: Shawn Michaels always said he was the showstopper. And he and Y2J almost stole the show at WrestleMania. Jericho claimed he was going to pry the proverbial torch from the hands of HBK but Michaels wasn't ready to let go. Michaels eventually scored the pinfall after some sweet chin music, but Jericho proved he was good enough to go toe-to-toe with HBK. Both men came out of the match looking like winners.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [22 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters that did not capture a runner-up spot include: Raven vs. A.J. Styles (March 19), Hulk Hogan vs. Vince McMahon (March 30), Steve Austin vs. The Rock (March 30), Jeff Jarrett vs. Raven (April 30), Shelton Benjamin & Charlie Haas vs. Eddie Guerrero & Tajiri (May 18), Ric Flair vs. Triple-H (May 19), The Big Show vs. Brock Lesnar (June 10), Kurt Angle vs. The Big Show vs. Brock Lesnar (July 27), Elimination Chamber match (August 24), Kane vs. Shane McMahon (September 21), and Kurt Angle vs. John Cena (October 19).

BROCK LESNAR vs. KURT ANGLE

[26 percent]

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PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

THE SELF-PROCLAIMED world's greatest tag team got a rare vote of confidence from the fans.

Though Kurt Angle takes credit for pairing them, Shelton Benjamin and Charlie Haas made a natural tag team. Benjamin was a standout collegiate wrestler at the University of Minnesota, where he was a teammate of a fellow by the name of Brock Lesnar. Benjamin was a four-time All-America and reportedly the only man on the team capable of taking down Lesnar.

Haas was a two-time Big East champion wrestler with Seton Hall University and a former standout high school wrestler. As far as fundamentals go, they're the most impressive team in wrestling.

But it takes more than amateur skills to make it in WWE. Benjamin and Haas discovered it can help to have friends in high places. Enter Angle, who recruited the two to watch his back and officially made them members of Team Angle.

It didn't take long for Team Angle to prove itself, as Benjamin and Haas took the Smackdown tag title from the Guerreros on February 4. In their first true test as champs, they outwrestled the Guerreros and Chris Benoit and Rhyno in a WrestleMania XIX triple threat match. Although they were upset by the unlikely team of Tajiri and Eddie Guerrero at Judgment Day, they regained the belts on July 1. By the time they lost them to the Guerreros on September 16, Benjamin and Haas had held the Smackdown title for almost seven months of 2003. Considering the turbulent nature of WWE these days, that sort of longevity is rare, indeed!

"I can't say I approve of their tactics or their arrogance, but I respect their accomplishments," wrote Dana Holly of Louisville, Kentucky. "They win most of the time, and I have to admit that they usually look really good when they're winning."

"If nothing else, Benjamin and Haas have at least been a consistent team, and that's saying something," wrote Scott Heim of Salt Lake City. "Kane and Rob Van Dam self-destructed. The Guerreros were almost a part-time tag team. The APA were MIA for most of the year. The Bashams didn't do much until late in the year. And the Dudleys weren't all that impressive. You have to consider Benjamin and Angle the best team in WWE by a good margin."

Benjamin and Haas wasted no time in letting the Tag Team of the Year Award go to their heads.

"Even more proof that Shelton and I are the world's greatest tag team," Haas declared. "But you all knew that already. This shouldn't surprise anyone."

RUNNERS-UP

AMERICA'S MOST WANTED [19 percent]

First runners-up: Chris Harris and James Storm have developed into one of the finest teams in wrestling and are true crowd favorites in the TNA Asylum. The "Wildcat" and the "Cowboy" took plenty of heat in the beginning, but they earned respect the old-fashioned way: by beating anyone who dared disrespect them. Though they may be the most stable team in TNA, they have trouble holding on to the NWA tag title. Those disappointing reigns probably cost them even more votes.

THE DUDLEY BOYZ [16 percent]

Second runners-up: The 2001 Tag Team of the Year spent most of the year waving the flag for America against teams like La Resistance and William Regal and Lance Storm. While no one can dispute their success in WWE (seven tag titles since 2001 as of press time), their momentum was curbed this year by meaningless feuds. The Dudleys need a spark to help them recapture more of their old passion. Maybe a call to Joel Gertner is in order.

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LOS GUERREROS [13 percent]

Third runners-up: Eddie and Chavo were huge fan favorites and quite successful this year, but the team was hampered by injuries and Eddie's singles ambitions. Frankly, it's about time for Eddie and Chavo to decide if they want to be a tag team or if they want to go their separate ways for good. Eddie could contend for the Smackdown title, and Chavo could make a run at either the U.S. or cruiserweight title. "I didn't see much staying power in them," wrote Bill Hilts of San Diego.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [21 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: The APA, The Basham Brothers, Christian & Chris Jericho, Christopher Daniels & Elix Skipper, Simon Diamond & Johnny Swinger, Eddie Guerrero & Tajiri, Tamon Honda & Kenta Kobashi, Kane & Rob Van Dam, La Resistance, Keiji Muto & Arashi, and William Regal & Lance Storm.

TAG TEAM OF THE YEAR

SHELTON BENJAMIN + CHARLIE HAAS
[31 percent]

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KURT ANGLE LOST the Smackdown title to Brock Lesnar in the main event of WrestleMania XIX.

In fact, Angle also lost the Smackdown title to Lesnar in a September "Ironman" bout that was voted this year's Match of the Year.

In the October issue of *PWI,* the editors named Lesnar the Wrestler of the Half-Year, based on his performance through June. And, finally, Lesnar was handed the number-one spot in this year's *"PWI* 500."

So what business did people have selecting Angle as the 2003 Wrestler of the Year?

"Angle never seems to get his due from the fans or the wrestling press," wrote Al McCracken of Palmetto, Florida. "As far as I'm concerned, Angle is this generation's Ric Flair. His technical skills are unparalleled. But he's played the goofball for so long that the fans don't all acknowledge or recognize his greatness."

PWI readers certainly acknowledged Angle this year. As the ballots rolled in, it quickly became apparent that the Wrestler of the Year category would be a two-horse race. The lead switched back and forth between Angle and Lesnar several times. It wasn't until after Survivor Series that Angle finally took the lead for good over his arch-rival.

"Angle and Lesnar are pretty evenly matched when it comes to technical abilities and physical strength," wrote Tim Burns of West Islip, New York. "I think it comes down to how each man fared against similar opposition. Angle and Chris Benoit wrestled one of the greatest matches I've ever seen. Lesnar, on the other hand, tapped out to Benoit relatively quickly at Survivor Series. I couldn't imagine Angle tapping out in similar circumstances."

After tapping to both Angle's anklelock and Benoit's crossface, Lesnar has been tagged—by some—as a quitter. And when it comes to heart, it's hard to vote against Angle, who underwent a relatively new medical procedure so he wouldn't have to miss extended action (likely a year) recovering. He also wrestled at Survivor Series in intense pain, and had to undergo minor neck surgery just two days after the event.

This is Angle's first Wrestler of the Year Award, as he finished second in 2001 and fourth in 2000. As questions continue to loom about the condition of his neck, you can't help but wonder if he'll be able to stay healthy enough to win this honor again.

"A lot of people have been really great to me in the last year or so, even when I haven't done a lot to make them cheer me," Angle said. "It's always an honor when people make the effort to recognize what you've tried to do. It makes it worth all the pain and hard work and sacrifice."

RUNNERS-UP

BROCK LESNAR [30 percent]

First runner-up: You can't argue with "The Next Big Thing's" year. He won the Royal Rumble, toppled The Big Show, and won the Smackdown title at WrestleMania. The Smackdown beast also walked into an "Ironman" match against Angle and walked out with the big belt. But Lesnar made one decision that hurt his odds of repeating as Wrestler of the Year. "I can't vote for a man who needs Vince McMahon's interference," snipped Josh Thomas of Auburn, West Virginia.

TRIPLE-H [18 percent]

Second runner-up: Triple-H is the Rodney Dangerfield of wrestling—he just can't get no respect, no respect at all. The fact that HHH is also this year's Most Hated Wrestler hurt his chances of taking this honor, as did his reliance on Evolution to run interference for him. But the biggest thing standing in the way of Hunter claiming his first Wrestler of the Year Award was Goldberg. Seems like Triple-H has been taking his lumps ever since "Da Man" came to WWE.

A.J. STYLES [9 percent]

Third runner-up: A.J. Styles seemed to be the choice of fans who wanted to cast their vote for someone other than a WWE superstar. That's not to say Styles wasn't a deserving contender, however. Styles held the NWA heavyweight title for more than four months and established himself as one of NWA-TNA's franchise players. Some columnists even called him the best NWA champion since Ric Flair last held the gold. That's high praise for sure. And hardly undeserved.

VOTES FOR OTHERS [9 percent]

Some of the top vote-getters who did not capture a runner-up spot include: The Big Show, Bill Goldberg, Jeff Jarrett, Chris Jericho, Keiji Muto, and The Undertaker.

KURT ANGLE
[34 percent]

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

STANLEY WESTON AWARD: BRET HART

THE BEST THERE is, the best there was, and the best there ever will be.

For most wrestlers, that would come across as an arrogant exaggeration. For Bret Hart, it was a mission statement. And four years after his final match, many fans will tell you that statement still rings true.

Hart was the fulcrum on which the WWF-WCW war turned. He was sacrificed by Vince McMahon at the infamous 1997 Survivor Series, at which McMahon, Shawn Michaels, and referee Earl Hebner conspired to take his World title in front of a passionately pro-Bret audience in Montreal.

That match and the events leading up to it were immortalized in the documentary *Hitman Hart: Wrestling With Shadows.* But the film ended before the real drama began.

Hart was horribly mismanaged in WCW. His career came to an ignoble end when Goldberg landed a stiff kick to his head, giving him a serious concussion. Then there was the tragedy of May 23, 1999, when brother Owen fell to his death while being lowered from the ceiling of the Kemper Arena for a spectacular entrance. Owen's widow, Martha, sued the WWF for negligence, and the lawsuit splintered the Hart family.

Bret's marriage crumbled and ended in divorce. Martha and Diana Hart wrote books that put the family's dirty laundry out for all to see. Bret's mother, Helen, died in November 2001, and father Stu's health deteriorated. In June 2002, Hart suffered a stroke after falling off his bicycle. The road to recovery has been long and arduous.

This October, Stu—Bret's inspiration and closest friend—died at the age of 88.

The past six years have not been kind to a man who always set out to be a role model to fans, and to deliver the most exciting and realistic matches. But Hart doesn't want to be remembered as a tragic figure who believed in heroes when the fans wanted Attitude. He wants his work in the ring to be his enduring legacy. And that's what *PWI* honored in presenting Hart with the Stanley Weston Award.

"When I look back on my career, people believed the realism of my matches against Curt Hennig, Roddy Piper, The British Bulldog," Hart said. "I built up a reputation amongst serious wrestling fans as the guy that could make wrestling seem real again. I wasn't 6'8". I didn't have 30-inch arms. I didn't have a lot of the things you need to be the guy that carried the wrestling business. All I had was my wrestling ability."

Wrestling, not surprisingly, is a big part of many of Hart's earliest memories. At the age of six, he was selling programs for his father's Stampede promotion. He later made his debut in Stampede and in 1978 won tag championships with brothers Smith and Keith. He became one of the territory's top singles draws in the early-1980s, and was given a WWF contract when McMahon bought the territory from Stu.

It didn't take long for Bret and his brother-in-law Jim Neidhart to establish themselves as the top team in the federation. The Hart Foundation won the WWF tag title on January 26, 1987. Watching Bret's fluid transitions and graceful offensive moves, Gorilla Monsoon dubbed him "The Excellence Of Execution," a nickname that stuck throughout his career.

After two reigns with Neidhart, Bret moved into singles contention. At SummerSlam 1991, he captured his first WWF Intercontinental title with a thrilling win over Hennig. On October 12, 1992, Hart stunned the wrestling world by beating Ric Flair for the World title. Hart was put in the unenviable position of having to carry the WWF following the departure of Hulk Hogan and unremarkable reigns by The Ultimate Warrior and Randy Savage. Unlike those others, Hart was not just a personality; he had a true passion for the art of wrestling, and concentrated on presenting realistic, technically sound matches.

Even though Hart was one of the smallest champions in WWF history, he might have been the fightingest. By the time his head injury forced him to retire, Hart had won five WWF World titles, two WWF tag titles, two I-C titles, three WCW U.S. titles, one WCW tag title, and two WCW World titles. And now he receives the Weston Award, which was given posthumously to Owen in 1999.

"It's a huge honor to be listed among the names of those who have won this award before me—Johnny Valentine, Freddie Blassie, Buddy Rogers, Lou Thesz, and, of course, Owen," Hart said. "It's as big an honor as I can think of.

"I've found that the fans who take pride in being fans of mine are generally pretty decent people. I always walked away proud that these people in particular look up to me the way they do. If I [am remembered] in the end because the fans who look up to me endeavor to be the same kind of person that I try to be in the wrestling ring, I think the impact I've made has been very positive. I'm grateful the wrestling business gave me an opportunity to be that kind of role model, or hero, to people." □

YEAR IN REVIEW

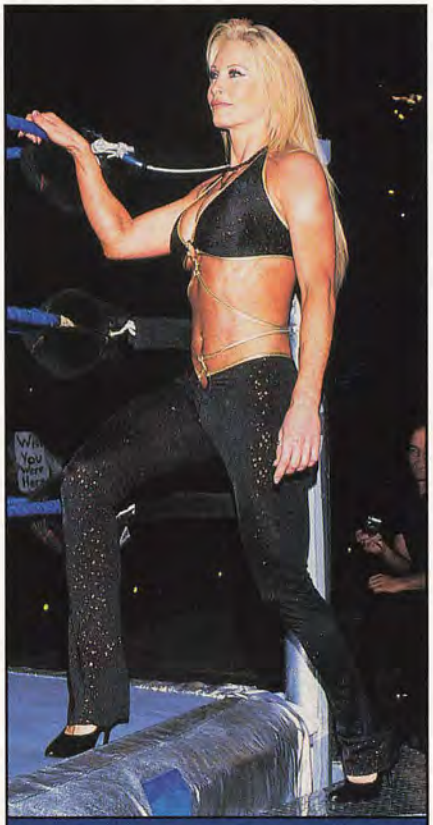
YOUR UNOFFICIAL/OFFICIAL AWARDS FOR 2003

Once again we have asked our readers to create their own awards and name the person, organization, etc. most deserving of those awards. It's our annual showcase of our fans' creativity, our way of dubiously honoring those involved with our fine sport

17,000 Women To Go To Catch Wilt Chamberlain: Ric Flair
—Barry Boudreaux, Houma, LA

25 Men Who Can't Score And One Who Can: The New York Mets and Val Venis
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

619: (tie) Rey Misterio Jr.'s signature move and Big Show's weight
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ



And We Thought Goldberg Was A Hypocrite: Sable returns to WWE
—Joe Mientus, Pittsburgh, PA

A Bigger Waste Of Money Than Mo Vaughn: Scott Steiner
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

... And He's Proud Of That?: Eric Bischoff publicly announcing that he lusts after Linda McMahon
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

And You Thought The XFL Was Vince McMahon's Worst Idea: Stephanie McMahon as head writer
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Another Year Later And They Still Haven't Gotten It Right: WWE cruiserweight division
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Any Day Now, He'll Be Joining The He-Man Woman Haters Club: Spanky
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

Are You Sure That Isn't Virgil In Drag?: Jazz
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

At Least She Lasted Longer Than Nathan Jones: Gail Kim
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

Austin 3:18 Says, "Thank You For Taking Me Back": Steve Austin
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

Best Breasts In Wrestling: Rosey (Super Hero In Training)
—Scott McCarthy, Broad Channel, NY

Best HLA Moment (Not Including Britney And Madonna): The Christopher Street Connection
—Scott McCarthy, Broad Channel, NY

Blowing Away The Competition: The Hurricane
—John Womack, Philadelphia, PA

Creepy Little Bastard: Christian
—Richard Edward Key, Petersburg, VA

Define "Oxymoron": WWE Creative
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Did I Miss His Last Retirement Match?: Terry Funk
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Don't Hate The Player, Hate The Game: Triple-H
—Richard Edward Key, Petersburg, VA

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Evolution? Well, He Does Drag His Knuckles: Triple-H
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Evolution's Missing Link: Batista
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Fashion Plates Don't Die. They Live Forever: Freddie Blassie
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

Fat Man And Robin: Rosie and The Hurricane
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Forget Jekyll ... Let's All Hyde!: Vince McMahon
—Richard Edward Key, Petersburg, VA

France's Answer To Billy And Chuck: La Resistance
—Joseph Piro, Jersey City, NJ

From A Gore To A Bore: Rhyno
—Juan Luna, Uniondale, NY

"Future" World Heavyweight Champion: Chris Sabin
—Leon Porter, Charlotte, NC

From NCAA Star To Luke Perry With A Suplex: Charlie Haas
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

From Walnut Grove To *Girls Gone Wild*: Stephanie McMahon
—Joseph Piro, Jersey City, NJ

Gets Pushed More Than A 1973 Ford Pinto: Brock Lesnar
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Gives New Meaning To The Term Handicap Match: Zach Gowen
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Heaven Is Now Perfect: Curt Hennig
—Erik Bhatnagar, Troy, AL

He Bombed Out Quicker Than Outback Jack: Nathan Jones
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

He Died With His Boots Off And His Smile On: Al Wilson
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

He Gives A Whole New Meaning To The Phrase "You Sick Freak": Vince McMahon
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

He'll Need To Have It Surgically Removed: Triple-H and the Raw title
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

He Looks Like A Pumped Up Uncle Fester With PMS: Kane
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

He Looks More Like Jazz Than Shaniqua: Shelton Benjamin
—Steve Walles, Stoneham, MA

He Makes Barry Bonds Look Like Ziggy: Shaniqua
—Joseph Piro, Jersey City, N

He Runs Circles Around The Competition: Zach Gowen
—Kevin Lonergan, Hyannis, MA

He's Got Leg And He Knows How To Use It: Zach Gowen
—Steve Kardolly, Olanta, PA

He's Not Following A Straight Path: Rico
—Mike O'Donnell, Mercerville, NJ

He Should Be Robert Blake's Wife In A Filthy Prison: Eric Bischoff
—Joseph Piro, Jersey City, NJ

He's Still Here?: Kevin Nash
—Mike O'Donnell, Mercerville, NJ

He Wrote A Book That You Could Really Sink Your Teeth Into: Freddie Blassie
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

His Career Has Been Derailed: A-Train
—Joe Mientus, Pittsburgh, PA

His Career Looks Like It Needs Some Mattitude: Jeff Hardy
—Juan Luna, Uniondale, NY

I'd Hate To Be The Guy Who Had To Clean The Inside Of Any Limousine He Was In: Vince McMahon
—Barry Boudreaux, Houma, LA

I Didn't Know Ja Rule Wrestled On *Smackdown!*: Shelton Benjamin
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

If He's Old School, What Does That Make Ric Flair?: The Undertaker
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Is He Channeling The Soul Of Adrian Adonis?: Rico
—Barry Boudreaux, Houma, LA

It's The End Of The World As We Know It: WWE closes The World restaurant
—Joe Mientus, Pittsburgh, PA

It Was Worth Every Penny: The NWA-TNA one-cent special
—Barry Boudreaux, Houma, LA

I Used To Arrest People Dressed Like Me In Las Vegas: Rico
—Frederick Scott, Boise, ID

I Would Make Fun Of Him, But He'd Kill Me: Brock Lesnar
—Erik Bhatnagar, Troy, Al

Journalist Of The Year: Gregory Helms, ace reporter
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

I've Been A Really Bad Girl, So I Need A: Spanky
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Just Like Ringling Bros. Circus, He's "The Greatest Show On Earth": The Amazing Red
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

Latino Cheat: Eddie Guerrero
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Less Hair, Fewer Wins: Eddie Guerrero
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

Lost Stacy And His Testicles: Test
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Makes The Osbournes Look Like The Cleavers: The McMahons
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Makes The Ultimate Warrior Seem Like A Good Interview: Brock Lesnar
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

More Heel Turns Than Riverdance: *Smackdown!*
—Steve Walles, Stoneham, MA

More Obvious Than PG-13 As The Cyberpunks: Hulk Hogan as Mr. America
—Barry Boudreaux, Houma, LA

Most Damage Done To A Trailer Park Since Hurricane Isabel: Jamie Noble and Nidia
—Ward Allen, Ontario, OR

Most Likely To Join *Queer Eye For A Straight Guy*: Rico
—Barry Boudreaux, Houma, LA

Mr. Personality: Lance Storm
—Jimmy Nance, Asheboro, NC

Next They'll Be Saying That Dusty Rhodes Was The Midnight Rider: Mr. America
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

Not Everybody Loves Raymond: *WWE Raw*
—Steve Walles, Stoneham, MA

Now Is The Time on *Raw* When We Dance: Lance Storm
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

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Now Those Are What I Call Fabulous Funbags!: Lollipop
—Leon Porter, Charlotte, NC

Ohio Valley, Here We Come!: A-Train, Test, and Nathan Jones
—Jimmy Nance, Asheboro, NC

Oh, I Think "MF'r" When I See Him On TV, All Right ... But I'm Not Thinking "Mattitude Follower": Matt Hardy
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Oh Yes, They Call Him The Streak: Brian "Spanky" Kendrick
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Okay, Maybe Removing The Mask Wasn't Such A Good Idea: Kane
—Leon Porter, Charlotte, NC

Okay, One Sign Of The Apocalypse Down, Three More To Go: Sable returns to WWE
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Old Man Walking: The Undertaker
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

One Classy Vampire: Freddie Blassie
—Kevin Lonergan, Hyannis, MA

Only Wrestler To Think "You Suck" Is A Term Of Endearment: Kurt Angle
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Play "Mist-y" For Me: Tajiri
—Richard Edward Key, Petersburg, VA

Pretty Fly For A White Guy: John Cena
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Puppies, Come Home!: Sable
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

Please Don't Die ... From Stupid Ass Angles: Paul London joins WWE
—Ronald Brush, Brooklyn, NY

Quote The Raven, "Screw You, Vince!": Raven gets released from WWE and becomes a top draw on the independent circuit.
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Recipe Left Out Of Jim Ross' Cookbook: Barbecued Jim Ross
—Scott McCarthy, Broad Channel, NY

Satan Must Have Shoveled Snow Off His Driveway After Seeing This: Sable returning to WWE
—Bobby Pitts, San Jose, CA

Separated At Birth: Theodore Long and George Jefferson
—Steve Walles, Stoneham, MA

Sexy, Sultry Siren In A Silly, Stupid Storyline: Stacy Keibler
—Steve Walles, Stoneham, MA

She's Got More Bags Than A Box Of Lipton Tea: Sable
—Richard Edward Key, Petersburg, VA

Should Be A Member Of The Hall Of Justice: The Hurricane
—Frederick Scott, Boise, ID

Sleeping With The Fishes? No, Just Buried On *Velocity*: The Full-Blooded Italians
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Slept His Way To The Top: Triple-H
—Scott McCarthy, Broad Channel, NY

Somehow, I Don't Think They're Part Of Darwin's Theory: Evolution
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Stars Of The Remake Of *The Odd Couple*: New Jack and Shark Boy
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Still Going After 100 Years: Ric Flair
—Leon Porter, Charlotte, NC

Still Lazy After All These Years: Kevin Nash
—Dave Whitaker, Danville, GA

Still Team Suck Squad To Me: Shelton Benjamin and Charlie Haas
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

Super Zero: The Hurricane
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

Talk To The Hand: Booker T
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Team No Respect: Lance Storm

Still A Peanut Head After All These Years: Theodore Long
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

and Chris Jericho
—John Womack, Philadelphia, PA

Thank Goodness She Wasn't The

The Five Most Shocking Words In *Puroresu*: Shinya Hashimoto Triple Crown champion
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

Diva Picked For *Playboy*: Mae Young
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

That's Funny, He Doesn't Look Like Isaac Yankem: Kane
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

The Blunder From Down Under: Nathan Jones
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

The King Is Dead: WWE eliminates King of the Ring pay-per-view
—Joe Mientus, Pittsburgh, PA

The Lex Luger Choke Artist Award: Scott Steiner
—Jimmy Nance, Asheboro, NC

The Most Momentous Meeting Since Mr. Reese Brought Chocolate And Peanut Butter Together: Goldberg meets Steve Austin on *Raw*
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

The Only Mac He'd Back Is A Big Mac: Mark Henry
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA

The People's Boss: Steve Austin
—Mike O'Donnell, Mercerville, NJ

The Tortoise And The Haire: Roddy Piper & Sean O'Haire
—Leon Porter, Charlotte, NC

The Virus Is Back: Don Callis debuts on NWA-TNA
—Mike O'Donnell, Mercerville, NJ

They Do The Work Of Three Men—Moe, Larry, And Curly: The Full-Blooded Italians
—Tom Smail, Lake Hiawatha, NJ

They Have More Holes Than An Old Blanket: WWE storylines
—Joe Mientus, Pittsburgh, PA

Used, Abused, And Confused: Rob Van Dam
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Viva La Lackey: Chavo Guerrero Jr.
—Mike O'Donnell, Mercerville, NJ

What Did I Do To Deserve This?: Lance Storm
—Leon Porter, Charlotte, NC

What Would You Do For a Klondike Bar?: Brian "Spanky" Kendrick
—Kevin Blanchard, capitalk2@hotmail.com

When Did ECW Move To Florida?: Major League Wrestling
—William Wright, Pearl City, HI

Where's Alfalfa?: Spanky
—Bobby Pitts, San Jose,CA

Whine2J: Chris Jericho
—Kevin Lonergan, Hyannis, MA

Who's David Hasselhoff?: Billy Kryptonite
—Leigh O'Halloran, Nashua, NH

Without Him, Smackdown Has Lost Some Of Its: Edge
—Melanie Larch, Charleston, WV

Your Three Minutes Are Up: Jamal
—Matthew Collins, Prestonsburg, KY

You Sunk My Battleship!: F5
—Jason Piechota, Pottstown, PA □

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

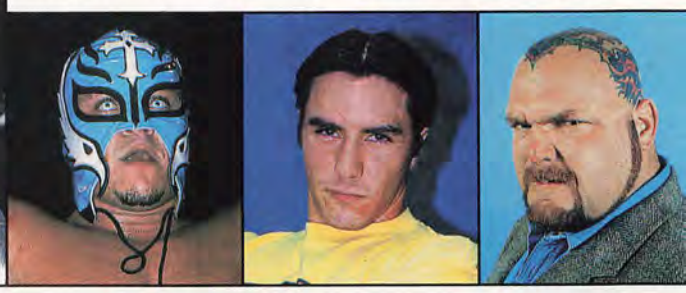
What do our readers think will happen in the world of professional wrestling during the next 12 months? Once again we asked them, and as usual, our armchair prophets came through with some bizarre ideas. Will anyone's 2004 predictions come true? Check this issue next year to find out!

NWA-TNA will get a national cable deal from TBS when **Ted Turner** buys Turner Broadcasting from AOL Time Warner ... WWE will hire **The Johnsons** to be **Rico** and **Goldust's** chariot drivers ... **Hulk Hogan** and **Ric Flair** both will announce their retirements at WrestleMania XX, only to announce their comebacks on *Raw* the next night ... **Sable** will reveal on *Smackdown* that **Vince McMahon's** "genetic jackhammer" is really a "genetic tackhammer" ... Sometime around Survivor Series, it will be revealed that Vince McMahon signed control of WWE over to **Triple-H** the day after Hunter wed **Stephanie**, prompting **Shane McMahon** to break away from WWE and start his own promotion—with **Paul Heyman** as his creative director ... Aliens will search for intelligent life inside political groups such as the PTC and The Lion And The Lamb Project and none will be found ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** will win the presidential election while wearing his mask. "If **Great Sasuke** can wear a mask while in political office," he will say, "then I can too!" ... **Kane** will be dropped into a vat of toxic waste and will come out without a single burn ... As an April Fools joke, Vince McMahon will announce that he signed **L. Brent Bozell** to be a new head writer, then force Bozell to kiss **Rikishi's** ass.

—Barry Boudreaux, Houma, LA

The Hurricane will jump off the roof of WWE headquarters in Stamford, Connecticut, and proceed to fly around the world in less than 60 seconds ... **"Macho Man" Randy Savage**, **Hulk Hogan**, and **Vader** will show up in WWE ... **Goldberg** will reign as the World heavyweight champion of Raw throughout the year ... **Randy Orton** will become so cocky, brash, arrogant, and egotistical that he will announce his retirement from wrestling, claiming that nobody is good enough to get in the ring with him ... **Bret Hart**, **Kevin Nash**, **Scott Hall**, and **Bam Bam Bigelow** will appear in NWA-TNA, injecting some badly needed star power into the organization ... **John Cena** will record a rap CD on a major label that will skyrocket to the top position on the *Billboard* chart ... **Scott Steiner's** gigantic biceps will suddenly explode as "Big Poppa Pump" lifts some heavy weights at the gym ... **Steve Austin** will do commercials for Miller Lite ... **The Rock** will win an Academy Award for his outstanding performance in *The Rundown* ... **Vince McMahon** will fire Raw co-GM **Eric Bischoff** live on TV, and ratings will dramatically increase afterward ... **Lance Storm** will become even more boring than he already is and will put an entire arena full of fans to sleep ... **Eddie** and **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** will open a taco stand in Tijuana ... **Mae Young** and **Fabulous Moolah** will pose for a popular men's magazine, and subscriptions will drop off by 95 percent.

—Mike Facciani, Johnstown, PA

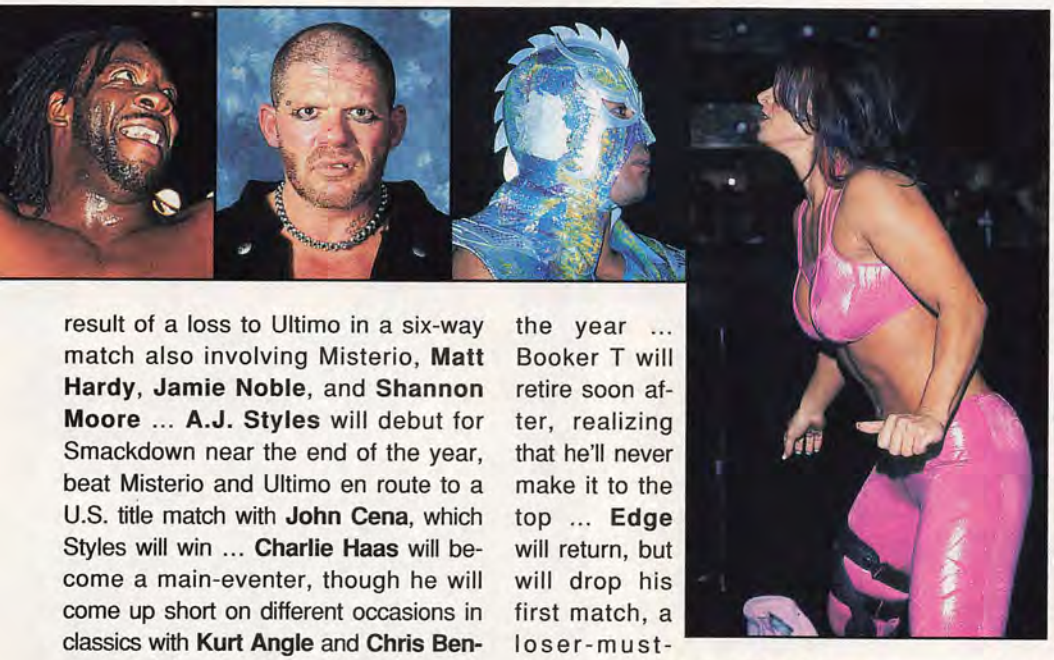


Sunny will return to the WWE and will try to dominate the women's division. However, **Sable** will make her return short-lived, with **Vince McMahon's** help ... **Victoria** will bear **Steven Richards'** love child ... **Lucy Furr** will make her Raw debut and fall in love with **Rob Van Dam** ... **Chyna** will run off with **Bob Sapp** and leave **Sean Waltman** at the altar ... **Jonathan Coachman** will agree to pose nude in *Playgirl* ... **Al Snow** will pose for *Field & Stream* ... **Trish Stratus** will star with **The Rock** in *Scorpion King II* ... Victoria will star as a crazy witch in a future Harry Potter movie ... **Jazz** will open a fitness center ... **Theodore Long** will become **Al Sharpton's** presidential campaign manager.

—Debony Williams, Baltimore, MD

Triple-H will relinquish the Raw title, arrogantly proclaiming that he cannot be beaten. **Rob Van Dam** will win the tournament for the vacant title by beating **Booker T** in the finals. However, he will soon lose the title back to Triple-H ... After an **Evolution** falling-out, **Randy Orton** will win the Raw title from Triple-H at SummerSlam and run out the year ... **Scott Steiner**, **Kane**, and **Kevin Nash** will be released, while **Shawn Michaels** and **Ric Flair** will retire, causing a major depletion of Raw talent ... After a falling-out, **Steven Richards** will dump **Victoria** in favor of **Jazz**, and then get crushed in a short feud with **Rodney Mack**, but he will earn **Teddy Long's** respect, thus ending the racial storyline. Mack will also then receive an I-C title push ... The Smackdown title will run through **Kurt Angle**, **Brock Lesnar**, Angle, **Chris Benoit**, **Eddie Guerrero**, and finish back with Angle ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** and **Ultimo Dragon** will dominate the cruiserweight division, although **Kidman** will get a reign in somewhere. His reign will end, though, as the result of a loss to Ultimo in a six-way match also involving Misterio, **Matt Hardy**, **Jamie Noble**, and **Shannon Moore** ... **A.J. Styles** will debut for Smackdown near the end of the year, beat Misterio and Ultimo en route to a U.S. title match with **John Cena**, which Styles will win ... **Charlie Haas** will become a main-eventer, though he will come up short on different occasions in classics with **Kurt Angle** and **Chris Benoit** ... And best of all, a dual diva issue of *Playboy* will be released, featuring **Stacy Keibler** *and* **Trish Stratus**!

—Jeff Judd, heluvajobu@yahoo.com



The brand extension will continue, but with hardly any signs of pushes for people like **Matt Hardy**, **John Cena**, **Rhyno**, **Rob Van Dam**, **Steven Richards**, **Ultimo Dragon**, and so many others that are more talented than half of the main-eventers ... **Triple-H** will win, lose, then win the Raw title again, all on the same show ... The WrestleMania XX main event will be **Triple-H** vs. **Vince McMahon** in a father-in-law vs. son-in-law "Ironman" match with **Stephanie** as the guest ring announcer, **Linda** as the guest timekeeper, and **Shane** as the special guest referee. WrestleMania will be considered a flop, and Vince won't understand why ... The Intercontinental title will be retired again after **Booker T** wins it and WWE doesn't know what else to do with it. This will lead to a unification match with him and U.S. champion **Chris Benoit**. It will be a classic, but will be overshadowed by the Raw title match between Vince and Shane McMahon ... Shane will win the Raw title, then hand it over to **Triple-H**, who will hold on to the belt until the end of the year ... Booker T will retire soon after, realizing that he'll never make it to the top ... **Edge** will return, but will drop his first match, a loser-must-leave match against **Brock Lesnar** ... NWA-TNA will celebrate its second year with a huge title match: **Vince Russo** vs. **Carrot Top** for the NWA title. Fortunately, **Raven** will interfere and finally win the title ... A week later, Raven will lose the title to **C.M. Punk** ... Brock Lesnar and **Kurt Angle** will trade the Smackdown title throughout the year, with Benoit finally winning it at Survivor Series ... Benoit will close the year as the Smackdown champion, leaving everyone with smiles on their faces.

—James Bullock, Richmond, VA

NWA-TNA will improve, but will still be significantly behind WWE ... **Randy Orton** will win the I-C title and make a run at the Raw title, only to lose on numerous occasions ... **Chris Benoit** will win the Smackdown title and turn heel ... **John Cena** will come close to winning the Smackdown title as a babyface many times ... **Rob Van Dam** will still not get pushed and will leave the WWE to pursue other wrestling opportunities ... **Kane** will have a short reign as Raw champ before losing the title back to **Goldberg** ... Cena's rap CD will not be a hit, and in disgust, he will change his name back to **Prototype** ... **Brock Lesnar** will win the Smackdown title two more times and will go down as the greatest WWE champ of all-time ... Chris Benoit will develop a classic feud with Lesnar like Brock did with **Kurt Angle** ... **Jeff Jarrett** will lose and regain the NWA title ... **Paul London** will get some serious recognition in WWE, but will need a decent gimmick to do so ... **Evolution** will wreck havoc on WWE and will play a part in Goldberg losing the Raw title ... **Batista** will get a bigger push than RVD, which will be sad ... **Jeff Hardy** will return to WWE and will be greeted with a chorus of boos ... **The Rock** will return to entertain the fans and once again become the people's champ!

—Mike O'Donnell, Mercerville, NJ □

the steel cage

By Liz Hunter

VINNIE MAC UNDER ATTACK. I was as stunned as anyone when John Cena appeared on the November 20 broadcast of *Smackdown* and blistered WWE Chairman Vince McMahon with a barrage of very cutting verbal barbs. Not even Sable, Mr. McMahon's main squeeze, was saved from Cena's wrath. This begs the question: Why is Cena so angry?

We already know that Cena was angered because he was left off Smackdown champion Brock Lesnar's Survivor Series team, which included U.S. champ The Big Show, A-Train, Nathan Jones, and Matt Morgan. That team might as well as have been called "The Clumsy Colossus" for all the uncoordinated and uninspired efforts that quartet—excluding Morgan—has put forth over the years. These seemed to be illogical choices for Lesnar, the 2000 NCAA heavyweight champion, to make. Cena obviously deserved a spot.

I'm glad Kurt Angle gave Cena the opportunity to join him, although teammates Chris Benoit, Bradshaw, and Hardcore Holly were skeptical. Of course, Cena and Benoit emerged as the survivors in their match against Team Lesnar ... and Cena earned a lot of respect that night.

But why did Cena go out of his way to antagonize Mr. McMahon? No one since Steve Austin has gone to such lengths. Now that Austin has parted ways with the company, at least temporarily, Cena is preparing to seize the anti-establishment mantle in WWE. I think it works. A rappin' gangsta is as much a rebel as a "Texas Rattlesnake."

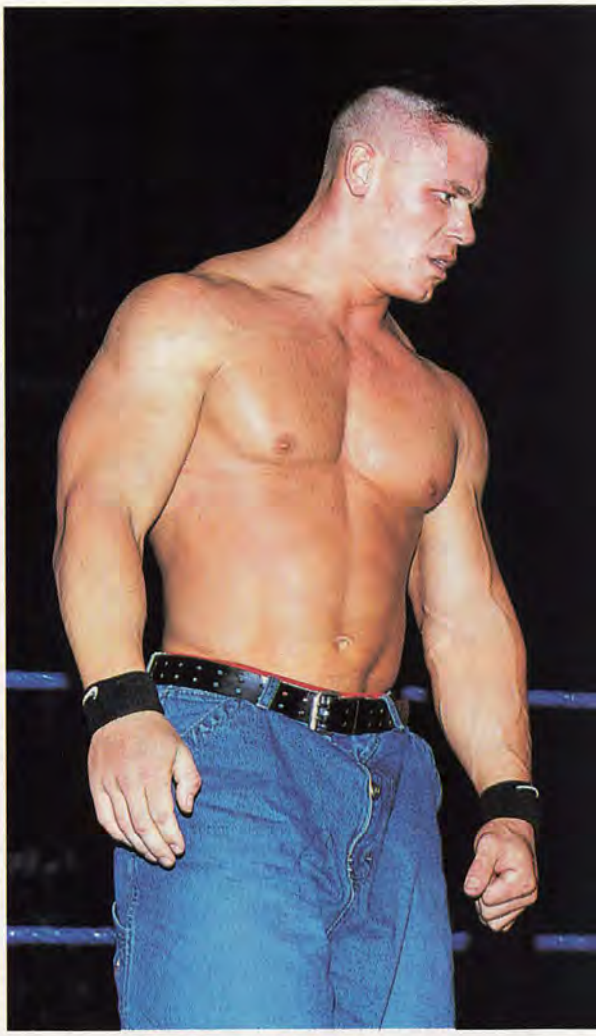
As Cena himself would say, Vinnie Mac is in for some physical chess.

HOGAN'S NEW PRIORITIES. The cynics out there have accused Hulk Hogan of signing up for NWA-TNA's first three-hour Sunday night pay-per-view just so he can have negotiating leverage against WWE when WrestleMania XX rolls around. The super-cynics have suggested that Hogan's knee surgery on October 31 could have been postponed until after "Bound For Glory," which was originally scheduled to take place on November 30 and will now take place in February. In other words, it was a way for Hogan to cop out of the PPV so he could negotiate with Vince McMahon for 'Mania XX.

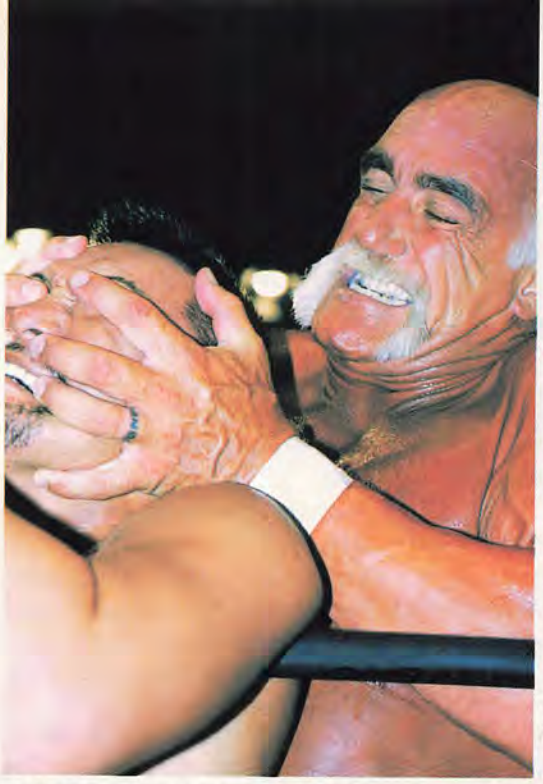
While Hogan's reputation has improved since his WCW days, when he was often accused of being the ultimate backstage manipulator, he still has enemies. As hokey as it sounds, these people don't understand "Hulkamania" and why Hogan is so popular. They can't explain his success through work rates and high spots. To these people, that means his accomplishments are due to backstage influence and political maneuvering.

Hogan is simply an excellent businessman. He doesn't agree to do things that hurt his career for the sake of "doing right by the business." Hogan has always believed that what hurts his career also hurts the business. That may seem like an egomaniacal view to some, but not when you consider that it was Hogan's star power alone that fueled the wrestling industry at various points over the past 20 years.

With a bad back and ailing knees, Hogan realizes his active career is nearing an end. Hogan tried to defeat Vince McMahon with WCW and the New World Order, and made a much more modest effort with the XWF a few years ago. I think Hogan wants to battle Mc-



John Cena doesn't seem to have much in common with Steve Austin, although both have shown a willingness to defy Vince McMahon. Liz Hunter believes he has what it takes to take on the boss and win.



Hulk Hogan has been accused of being a master manipulator for years, though Hunter isn't buying the theory that the "Hulkster" had knee surgery and thus forced the postponement of his TNA debut just so he could have negotiating leverage against WWE.

Mahon again, this time with TNA as his weapon of choice. I wouldn't be surprised if Hogan has a financial stake and a very influential role in TNA in the near future.

Hogan wants to be remembered as the most important figure in wrestling history. He must humble McMahon to accomplish that goal ... and accepting failure is not in Hogan's nature.

A DOUBLE STANDARD? I was among the many fans disappointed to see Lex Luger team with NWA champion Jeff Jarrett against A.J. Styles and Sting on the November 12 TNA pay-per-view. I hate exploitation in wrestling, especially the kind that attempts to profit from a battered woman's premature demise. I suspect TNA officials were banking on fans wanting to catch a glimpse of the pathetic figure that Luger had supposedly become. Luger, who was in better condition for this event than his much-discussed World Wrestling All-Stars tour in late-2002, disappointed them.

My criticism of Luger aside, I'd like to know why very few fans and journalists chastised Vince McMahon for rehiring Steve Austin in early-2003 in spite of a domestic incident involving his then-wife, Debra. Who's to say that Luger's alleged drug issues are more severe?

If I remember correctly, even *PWI* writers were cheerleading an Austin comeback. Harry Burkett practically begged him to return to WWE in "Stone-Cold Meltdown! What It Means To Wrestling," published in the November 2002 issue of *PWI*. He wrote, "Austin is one of those rare superstars capable of making or breaking promotions. Pro wrestling has been his life for 12 years. He's addicted to the business. Austin can't stay home, drink beer, and go deer hunting forever, can he?"

Harry was downright giddy over the prospect of a "Stone-Cold" comeback, regardless of Austin's misdeeds. For the sake of consistency, I hope he's equally forgiving of Luger. □

strange list of the month

FIVE GREAT RAPPERS WHO MIGHT HAVE INSPIRED JOHN CENA

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win, lose, or draw

By Harry Burkett

WHILE FLIPPING THROUGH *The Wrestling Almanac* recently, I realized that 2002 had been the 30th anniversary of our "Achievement Awards." I could be wrong, but I don't think that anniversary was mentioned anywhere in the issue. So, in 2003, I'm going to make things right: To celebrate the 31st anniversary of the "Achievement Awards," I will select the greatest award winners of all-time and, just to fuel the flames of controversy, also choose the least deserving recipients. Here we go.

Wrestler of the Year: Ric Flair. He still holds the distinction for winning the award on three consecutive years, 1984 to 1986, at the height of "Hulkamania" no less. Flair also won the award in 1981, when he defeated Dusty Rhodes for the NWA World title, and again in 1989 and '91, when he beat Rick Steamboat and Sting, respectively, for the belt.

X-Pac and Kane were unlikely winners of the Tag Team of the Year award in 1999. Harry Burkett will never understand how this blase duo wound up with more votes than The Hardy Boyz, Harlem Heat, and the Dudleys.

Least deserving winner: Lex Luger. Sure, the "Total Package" was consistently popular in 1997 and beat Hulk Hogan for a five-day WCW World title reign, but to say he was the company's standout wrestler during its hottest period seems implausible in hindsight. Okay, I know, it's easy to knock Luger while he's down, but I felt this way even back then.

Tag Team of the Year: The Road Warriors. They are the only team to win the award in three consecutive years, 1983 to 1985. The Warriors won again in 1989 when they defeated The Midnight Express for the NWA World tag team belts. They made tag team wrestling as hot as it has ever been. No, this isn't a sympathy vote for Hawk.

Least deserving winners: Kane and X-Pac. Their two WWF World tag team title reigns in 1999 totaled only 2½ months. They were an odd couple with zero chemistry. The "X-Pac-Tori Christmas story" was the only aspect that made this pairing memorable. And I bet you've forgotten about Tori already.

Match of the Year: The Rock vs. Hulk Hogan. After a nine-year absence, Hogan had returned to the WWE and The Rock was at his peak as a main-eventer. The Rock transcended wrestling as a mainstream celebrity in 2002, a trail that Hogan had blazed in the '80s. All of the elements came together perfectly for this one.

Least deserving winner: Shawn Michaels vs. Marty Jannetty. This was Michaels' breakout match in 1993, the one in which he leapfrogged Jannetty and killed off The Rockers forever, but it's not as if HBK had beaten an established main-eventer. Today, this would be a worthwhile *Raw* main event, not much more.

Feud of the Year: Hulk Hogan vs. Paul Orndorff. It was the Hogan-Orndorff feud that prompted *PWI's* editors to create this award. Their most famous clash drew 74,080 fans to Toronto's Exhibition Stadium on August 28, 1986. Orndorff turning against Hogan consumed the WWF nearly all year. Obviously, their feud was bigger than just one bout.

Least deserving winner: Axl Rotten vs. Ian Rotten. These brothers turned against each other in ECW, and engaged in some of the bloodiest matches ever seen in wrestling. Barbed wire, glass, tables ... nothing was off-limits. But this feud lacked the human emotion and drama that makes such rivalries so compelling. There was no soul to it.

Most Popular Wrestler of the Year: Hulk Hogan. Amazingly, "The Hulkster" won only one Most Popular Award during the boom of the mid-'80s, and that was in 1985. The most plausible explanation for this was that Hogan was splitting his votes with other WWF fan favorites. Ironically, Hogan won again in '89 and '91 when "Hulkamania" was showing signs of wear. For consistent popularity, though, Hogan is the all-time winner.

Least deserving winner: Lex Luger. I hate to pick on poor Luger again, but I don't understand how he could have possibly won the Most

Popular Award in November 1993, a full four months after the "Lex Express" derailed at SummerSlam. The WWF had already given up on him. Didn't anybody else realize that?

Most Hated Wrestler of the Year: Greg Valentine. "The Hammer" was despicably bad wherever he went. I'd wager he was the youngest man ever to receive this dubious honor in 1975, and he went on to break Wahoo McDaniel's leg for it in 1979, and bust Roddy Piper's ear for it in 1983. He was a cold-blooded sadist for most of his career.

Least deserving winner: Bret Hart. "The Hitman" turned into a directionless heel while in WCW in 1997, feuding with Dallas Page and Sting over the U.S. title and teaming with "Hollywood" Hogan for no logical reason. He wasn't effective because his heart wasn't in it. WCW Creative deserved our readers' wrath more than Hart.

Most Improved Wrestler of the Year: Brock Lesnar. He didn't exactly capture the imagination while in Ohio Valley Wrestling. John Cena, Randy Orton, and even Doug Basham received monster pushes in OVW, compared to Lesnar. Then, seemingly out of nowhere in 2002, he dominated Ric Flair and Hulk Hogan, won King of the Ring, and defeated The Rock for the WWE undisputed title at SummerSlam. It was an incredible run.

Least deserving winner: Ahmed Johnson. He was clumsy and had shaky verbal skills. In 1996, Ahmed created the spot that The Rock would later fill, even down to his feud with The Nation. Maybe Vince McMahon considered this a dry run for how he would promote Rocky Maivia in the future. Heck, he even gave Dwayne Johnson's last name to Ahmed.

Most Inspirational Wrestler of the Year: Zach Gowen. Has anyone had to overcome greater odds than Gowen? Absolutely not. His inspiring story goes beyond wrestling, and he serves as a role model for kids with disabilities everywhere. If Zach can do it, anyone can ... and that's the ultimate positive message. He's a deserving 2003 award recipient.

Least deserving winner: Barry Horowitz. The WWF preliminary wrestler finally scored a few wins in 1995, and that propelled him to the award. It had been a decade since Horowitz (then known as Jack Hart) won the Florida State title in an upset. There was nothing about his career that was inspiring, a handful of fluke victories notwithstanding.

Rookie of the Year: Kurt Angle. He didn't debut in the WWF until Survivor Series 1999, yet, by the end of 2000, Angle had captured the European, Intercontinental, and World heavyweight championships. The Olympic gold medalist blended tremendous athletic ability with an uncanny sense of how to work a crowd. He was great from the start.

It's true, it's true. Kurt Angle was the best of the 2000 rookie crop according to the fans. Burkett suggests that fans saw Angle's greatness shine through—even when his neck and waist were piled high with championship gold.

Least deserving winner: Ric Flair. He didn't win the award until 1975, when he'd already been in the business three years. So, technically, he wasn't a rookie. Enough said.

Comeback of the Year: Eddie Guerrero. He was involved in a terrible auto accident on New Year's Day of 1999, and suffered internal injuries-including a punctured liver as a result. Guerrero returned to WCW within six months, sooner than expected, and had whipped himself into the best shape of his career.

Least deserving winner: Hulk Hogan. I'm referring to Hogan being the winner in 1994, not 2002. When Hogan jumped to WCW in '94, he was granted the most lucrative contract in his career and received the full backing of Ted Turner. He was given every opportunity to succeed. The most dramatic comebacks are against the odds.

Woman of the Year: Stephanie McMahon. Nobody helped shape wrestling in 2000 as much as Stephanie. She was a powerbroker backstage as a member of the creative team, and on-air with the McMahon-Helmsley Faction. She is poised to become the most important woman in wrestling history.

Least deserving winner: Lita. The year 2000 was actually Lita's breakout year, not 2001 when she won the award. It was a decent year for her, but it didn't affect the women's division in any significant way.

***PWI* Editors'/Stanley Weston Award: Lou Thesz.** The six-time NWA World champion received the award in 1982 and the case could be made that he deserved it before 1981's recipient, Bruno Sammartino. Thesz was worthy of this lifetime-achievement recognition.

Least deserving winners: Adrian Adonis and Bruiser Brody. At times, our editors have a knee-jerk reaction to award the honor posthumously to wrestlers who have died in a particular year, which is what happened in 1988. Sometimes it's warranted, sometimes not. But these were great wrestlers nonetheless. May they rest in peace. □

the straight shooter

By Dan Murphy

SO 2003 HAS finally drawn to a close. What a great year to be a wrestling fan, huh?

We got to see some classic matches between Kurt Angle and Chris Benoit, Angle and Brock Lesnar, and Raven and Jeff Jarrett. A.J. Styles came of age, Chris Jericho became the new Roddy Piper right around the time the old Roddy Piper returned to WWE. Great stuff from the Royal Rumble to Armageddon and every Wednesday night in between.

Well, that's all fine and dandy. If you want to relive the glory, the five-star classics, and the inspirational tales that made you weep like a little girl, read the Achievement Awards section. This is the year-end edition of "The Straight Shooter," which means it's time for my annual look at the Top 10 Most Ridiculous Wrestling Moments of the Year.

This is where we cherish the necrophilia skits and raise our glass to Viagara-on-a-pole matches. The late WCW always seemed to cowboy up and deliver sheer ridiculousity, and WWE and NWA-TNA had to work extra hard to pick up the slack this year. Luckily, they did, with slack to spare.

Let's dive into the dreck, shall we?

10. Dawn Marie vs. Torrie Wilson (Royal Rumble)

This is the first "feud" ever to be honored in back-to-back years, as Dawn sexed poor Al Wilson to death at the end of 2002, and poor Torrie sought revenge in January. Okay, so Torrie was furious that some sleazy harlot offed her old man with vigorous nookie (and what better way is there to go, Miss Wilson?). I can (grudgingly) accept that. But in the big knockdown, drag-out grudge match at the Rumble, we didn't get a catfight at all. In fact, it was probably the most technically sound match either woman has ever wrestled. Check the tape: At one point, Dawn Marie even applied a Fujiwara armbar! Did Dawn bone up for the bout by studying Japanese *puroresu* tapes? In the end, Torrie came out on top and poor Al was barely mentioned again.

9. Hulk Hogan takes the Midnight Rider Award

Vince McMahon banished Hulk Hogan from Smackdown shows, and who showed up but Hogan's close personal friend, the masked Mr. America. While there were a few similarities between Hogan and the 6'8" hooded wonder (eerie orange skin, partiality to legdrops, 24-inch pythons), Hogan contended he and Mr. America simply worked out and tanned together. Just to make things a tad more ridiculous, throw in a one-legged wrestler, a pot-bellied Roddy Piper, Rikishi, a coconut, Sean "Has It Really Come To This?" O'Haire, and Vince McMahon, and stir the ingredients vigorously. Then fire Hogan (*er*, Mr. America) and Piper for real, send O'Haire back to "B" show purgatory, and have Brock Lesnar throw the one-legged guy down a flight of stairs. That's conflict resolution, WWE-style.

8. Tonight's Distinguished Speaker: The Warrior

The former WWF World champion hit the college speaking circuit, chatting with students on politics alongside infamous Watergate figure G. Gordon Liddy. At Bentley College in Waltham, Massachusetts, Warrior addressed the Bentley College Republicans. He opened by quoting Pericles: "Just because you are not interested in politics does not mean politics is not interested in you." An odd opener, since you might expect the College Republicans to be mildly interested in politics, but no matter. Warrior summed up the speech on his Web site, in which he stated: "There are plenty of things I am ignorant about. By not denying it, I can stay foked (sic) on what I can learn and know; and mentor better." In addition, he declared, "If we teach our children the True meaning of America's idea, its struggle for life, its history of how it got to be what it

Torrie Wilson probably thought she made a bold move when she decided to bare it all for *Playboy* this year. Unfortunately, Dan Murphy remembers other things she did in the last year a little better.

Who is that masked man choking Shelton Benjamin, brother? Well, you know something, brother, he looks like ... *nah* ... couldn't be! The Murph, it seems, is still trying to figure out the Hulk Hogan/Mr. America abomination.

became, then we transfer that self-esteem into the SOUL of the person, then they will know that they are a HUMAN version of all of the MONSTEROUSLY magnanimous idea America is. THEY WILL BE ONE WITH THE PHILOSOPHY OF AMERICA." Maybe Rush Limbaugh could figure out what that meant.

7. Hoooooo!

Jimmy Hart said he had a surprise in store for Jeff Jarrett—a man Hart previously managed who was coming to TNA to avenge Jarrett's sneak-attack on Hogan in Japan. That man was none other than 50-year-old Hacksaw Duggan, who tossed Jarrett around for about four minutes before nearly passing out. Then Hart sent Rick Steiner after Jarrett. Unless Hart is now managing the local Home Depot, he never previously managed either man.

6. The Total Package, supersized!

NWA-TNA took plenty of heat for bringing in Lex Luger on November 12. After all, Luger last made headlines for being arrested on 14 counts of drug possession and because he was with Elizabeth Hulette when she died. He had previously been charged with assault in connection with an incident involving Hulette. Luger looked bloated and lethargic in the ring, and even the fans who came to the TNA Asylum to see him weren't impressed. Worse, he badmouthed A.J. Styles and gave him quite the beating before Styles and Sting beat Luger and Jarrett in the end. Nothing like making a company's franchise player look like a patsy in your one appearance.

5. Who knew porn and wrestling didn't mix?

Extreme Associates, the parent company of XPW, was raided by FBI agents and postal inspectors, who seized records, videotapes, and model releases for a line of adult films the company produced. Promoter Rob Black (Robert Zicari) was indicted on charges of selling obscene videotapes, including one that depicts the rape and murder of a woman, and distributing those tapes across state lines and over the Internet. And all this time we just thought XPW was guilty of promoting lousy wrestling.

4. The APA Invitational

A PPV bar brawl featuring the APA as well as the Easter Bunny, Spanky, Doink the Clown, The Conquistadors, The Brooklyn Brawler, Brother Love, and Sean "Really, Where Did I Go Wrong?" O'Haire, among others. Somewhere, "Iron" Mike Sharpe and Xanta Claus wondered why they didn't get a call.

3. The indecent proposal match

I can't blame Jamie Noble for looking to trade up from Nidia to Torrie. But there was something disturbing about seeing Noble, Torrie, Nidia, and Billy Gunn all in bed together days after the match, particularly after Billy's dalliance with Chuck Palumbo. Yet another smack in the face of poor Billy Kidman, now Torrie's real-life husband, who *still* can't get any face time.

2. Rappin' Randy

You at least have to give the "Macho Man" credit for trying to reinvent himself. But when Savage tries to earn street cred with a hardcore rap album, it's just an idea destined for failure. Somewhere, Vanilla Ice and Snow are feeling sorry for this guy. Sample rhyme: "Hollywood Hulkster, you're at the end of your rope. And I'm gonna kick you in the butt and wash your mouth out with soap." That's about as hardcore as Clay Aiken. Look for *Be A Man* in your local CD discount bin ... or dumpster.

1. Mae busts out the thong!

The Bad Blood "Redneck Triathalon" between Steve Austin and Eric Bischoff was wrong on many levels. Austin struck first with a stirring victory in a belching competition. Things took a horrifying turn during the pie-eating contest when Mae Young stripped to a thong and rubbed her crotch in "Easy E's" face. It made Austin's stunner on an 80-year-old woman seem perfectly justified. Finally, Austin beat up Bischoff and tossed him face-first into a pile of pig manure. Surprisingly, Bischoff said rolling around in pig feces was still better than working for WCW. □

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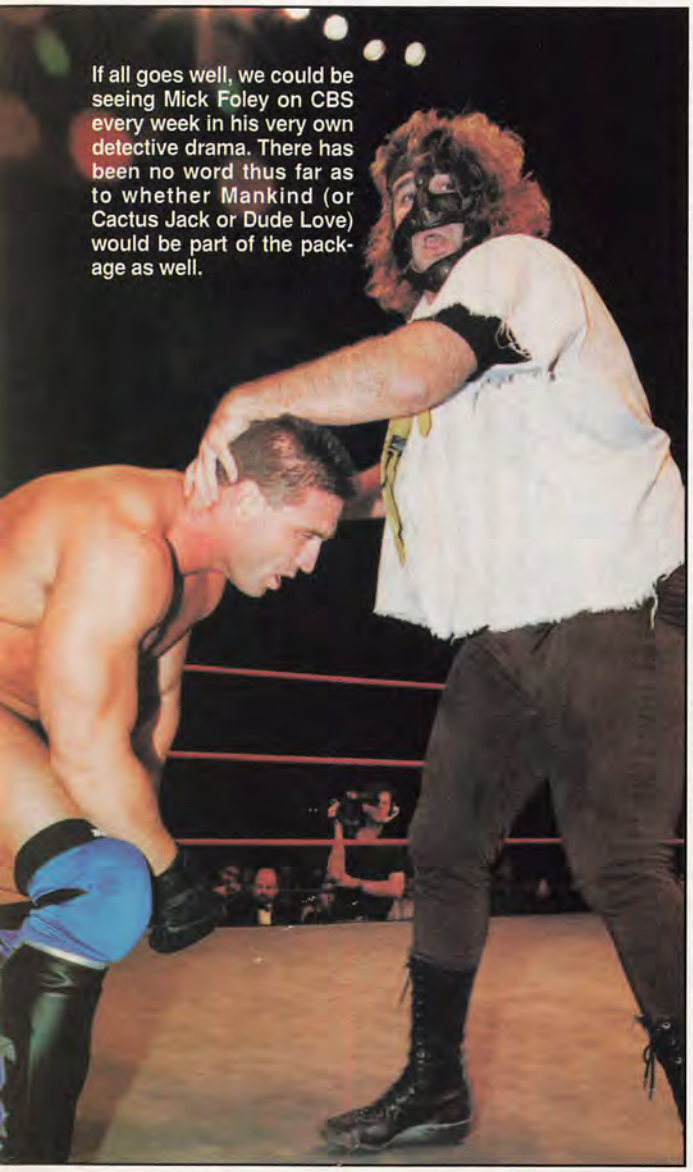
the business page

By Harry Burkett

Detective Foley? If Mick Foley's next project goes according to plan, don't expect him to stay in his job as Raw co-general manager for long. The former WWF World champion is negotiating with CBS to develop and star in a series about a detective on the Tampa Bay police force. The most enticing aspect of the project for Foley must be that he will have creative input into the program, a perk that most TV stars aren't afforded. Plus he would do his own stunts.



If all goes well, we could be seeing Mick Foley on CBS every week in his very own detective drama. There has been no word thus far as to whether Mankind (or Cactus Jack or Dude Love) would be part of the package as well.

Foley would have major influence over the series because WWE Films, with Vince and Linda McMahon in charge, would produce the show. As a two-time best-selling author, Foley is expected to work closely with scriptwriter Teddy Tenebaum.

CBS was the natural choice because it is a property of Viacom, which also owns Spike TV and was once a minority shareholder in WWE. Foley is a former host of *Robot Wars* on TNN, which was also owned by Viacom. Of course, CBS has the final say on whether the one-hour show makes it to the air.

This is yet another exciting project Foley has been involved in since retiring as an active wrestler. Aside from a possible match against Triple-H at WrestleMania XX, Foley is still busy promoting his first novel, *Tietam Brown,* and has other book plans for the future.

WWE talking smack ... Seeking to expand upon its young male demographic, WWE will launch a $2-million campaign to woo those viewers in advertising spots that will appear in several media outlets owned by Time Warner, the former parent company of WCW. The outlets include TNT, TBS, *Entertainment Weekly, Sports Illustrated,* America Online, and the Cartoon Network, during its late-night "Adult Swim" programming.

"*Smackdown* is the perfect antidote to the Thursday night prime time lineup of blah-blah," cooed Kurt Schneider, WWE's executive vice president of marketing. Although *Smackdown* is rated in the top 10 of regularly scheduled broadcast prime time programs among males aged 12 to 24, there is evidence that young males are tuning out traditional television altogether in favor of DVDs and video games.

The concept, with the tag line "Smack Your TV," was conceived by the Wong Doody advertising agency in Seattle. The commercials will run on television and radio for more than five months. A similar campaign for *Raw* is under development.

Finally a cable home? NWA-TNA is reportedly attempting to work out a deal with WGN-TV, which airs on many cable systems and is available via satellite throughout the United States. Apparently, the Jarretts and Panda Energy believe it is crucial for TNA to gain a national cable contract because the company's pay-per-views and its syndicated program, *Xplosion,* simply don't have enough exposure.

As of now, WGN isn't interested in gaining much of a financial stake in TNA and is just offering a one-hour time slot. WGN's pro-

gramming fees range from $25,000 to $75,000 per hour. Traditionally, most promotions—whether with cable or syndicated shows—have refused to pay for air time, making the case that pro wrestling garners high enough ratings to allow the home network to fill time with its own commercials or provide strong lead-ins to other programs. It doesn't appear WGN is buying that argument so far, especially without Hulk Hogan officially on board yet, but might be willing to lower the rates if TNA buys advertising time during other shows.

WGN is a Chicago-based station that has gained a national audience over the past two decades, reaching 60 million homes. Its owner, Tribune, is one of the largest media companies in the world. Interestingly, WTBS was an Atlanta-based station that gained a national audience, primarily with Atlanta Braves games and *Georgia Championship Wrestling.* Maybe WGN executives will decide that TNA is their missing component.

Diehard ECW fans will remember the fun-loving, high-energy Chilly Willy from the promotion's glory days. He is involved in a *much* more serious line of work now, and he recently received one of the most prestigious honors an American can receive.

Chilly Willy does good ...

William Jones, whose ring name was Chilly Willy, was awarded a Purple Heart for his service in the U.S. military while on tour in Iraq. A Purple Heart is given to members of the Armed Forces who are wounded by the enemy or to the families of those who have been killed in action. Fortunately, Jones has recovered from his wounds. Details regarding the incident or his injuries were not available as of press time. He is still serving in Iraq and is tentatively scheduled to return home in the spring of 2004.

Chilly Willy rose to prominence on the Southeastern indy circuit in the late-1990s, particularly with Southern Championship Wrestling. C.W. Anderson and Kid Kash were among his top rivals. Nicknamed "Mr. Homeboy," Chilly Willy possessed raw skill and charisma that eventually landed him a spot in ECW's lower tier. His highest-profile bout was a tag team effort with Mahoney against Tony DeVito and Angel in a flaming tables match in Chicago. He was ranked number 240 in the "*PWI* 500" in 2000.

He dropped his wrestling career and joined the military shortly after 9/11. □

WWE Stockwatch

(For the period of October 16, 2003-November 30, 2003)

45-Day High: 11.90 on November 25
45-Day Low: 10.42 on October 22
52-Week High: 11.90 on November 25, 2003
52-Week Low: 7.43 on April 10, 2003

WWE enjoyed its second consecutive profitable quarter for the period ending October 24, with a net profit totaling $17.1-million, compared to a net loss of $1.6-million during the same quarter in 2002. It's important to remember, however, that Vengeance occurred in the third quarter this year instead of the second, making it four pay-per-views instead of three. WWE also received $9-million from stunt harness manufacturer Lewmar Inc. in the Owen Hart settlement. During the same three-month period last year, WWE lost some revenue when it settled a lawsuit with the William Morris Agency.

In addition, WWE earned an additional 18 percent—compared to one year ago—in its television rights fees, thanks to a revised agreement with UPN. Under the new deal, UPN pays a set fee for *Smackdown.* That means UPN, not WWE, will collect the profits from advertising revenue. That benefits WWE right now, but UPN could benefit immensely if pro wrestling takes an upturn. Live events continue to be a concern, and that's now affecting overall merchandising revenue, which is down by 10 percent.

During its November 14 meeting, the WWE Board of Directors decided to issue a four-cent dividend for all Class A and Class B common shares again this quarter. The record date is December 31, 2003, and the payment date is January 9, 2004.

TV breakdown

Week beginning October 27

Raw (Spike TV): 3.4
Smackdown (UPN): 3.7
Velocity (Spike TV): 0.7
Confidential (Spike TV): 0.7
Sunday Night Heat (Spike TV): 0.9

Analysis: The ratings race between *Raw* and *Smackdown* continued to be neck-and-neck, with *Smackdown* gaining a slight advantage this week. The strength of *Smackdown's* number had to be based on its Halloween theme, not the lackluster main event pitting Bradshaw and Ron Simmons against Brock Lesnar and The Big Show. Over on *Raw,* Chris Jericho held the Intercontinental title for only a few minutes before co-GM Steve Austin ordered an immediate rematch. Rob Van Dam regained the belt in a cage.

Week beginning November 3

Raw (Spike TV): 3.7
Smackdown (UPN): 3.7
Velocity (Spike TV): 0.6
Confidential (Spike TV): 0.9
Sunday Night Heat (Spike TV): 1.0

Analysis: *Smackdown* maintained its edge over *Raw,* and the gap is bit wider than the numbers suggest because, remember, *Raw* receives a cable rating, which is a more inflated number than a broadcast rating. While *Raw's* main event featured Shawn Michaels vs. Mark Henry, *Smackdown's* handicap tag team match—pitting Kurt Angle and Chris Benoit against WWE Smackdown champ Brock Lesnar, Nathan Jones, Matt Morgan, and A-Train—did more to hype the upcoming Survivor Series.

Week beginning November 10

Raw (Spike TV): 3.7
Smackdown (UPN): 3.7
Velocity (Spike TV): 0.6
Confidential (Spike TV): 0.6
Sunday Night Heat (Spike TV): 0.9

Analysis: Raw champion Bill Goldberg beat Batista by DQ when Triple-H tried to interfere with his sledgehammer. Goldberg does draw viewers—as evidenced by *Raw's* improved number this week—so it's puzzling why the entire show isn't built around him, as it was for Steve Austin in the past. Meanwhile, *Smackdown* features more of an ensemble of quality wrestlers and is not just a promotional vehicle for one man. Chris Benoit and John Cena defeated Smackdown champ Brock Lesnar and The Big Show in that show's main event.

Week beginning November 17

Raw (Spike TV): 3.6
Smackdown (UPN): 3.6
Velocity (Spike TV): 0.9
Confidential (Spike TV): 0.8
Sunday Night Heat (Spike TV): 0.9

Analysis: Is Creative portraying Bill Goldberg as too much of a victim? That could be the case, judging from *Raw's* main event this week. Triple-H, Batista, and Randy Orton defeated Goldberg in a handicap match and, if that weren't enough, Kane attacked the Raw champion afterward. Smackdown did a much better job elevating John Cena, who unleashed a scathing promo on Vince McMahon and Sable and, in the main event, smashed The Big Show in the head with the ringside stairs to score a brutal victory.

Week beginning November 24

Raw (Spike TV): 3.6
Smackdown (UPN): 3.0
Velocity (Spike TV): 1.0
Confidential (Spike TV): 0.8
Sunday Night Heat (Spike TV): 1.2

Analysis: The night after Survivor Series, *Raw* again made the mistake of not building its entire show around Bill Goldberg. The Raw champion's match against Triple-H drew a 4.4 rating at the beginning of the second hour, but the numbers fell for each segment after that. *Raw* did much better than *Smackdown,* which took its annual Thanksgiving Day dive. *Sunday Night Heat,* which always scores higher than the other weekend shows because of its cushy time slot, earned a 1.2—an even better rating than usual.

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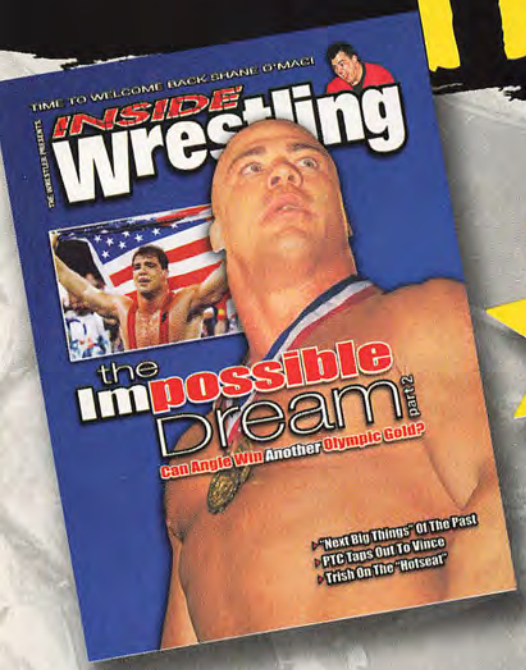
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Spotlight Card of the Month

ELIZABETH, NJ—Ring of Honor at the Rex Plex: **Diablo Santiago** & **Oman Tortuga** defeated **Special K** ... **Luis Ortiz** beat **Jose Perez** ... **Slyk Wagner Brown** & **Grim Reefer** defeated **Dunn** & **Marcos** ... **Dan Maff** beat **Colt Cabana** ... **Nigel McGuinness** & **Xavier** defeated **Tony Mamaluke** & **John Walters** ... **Matt Stryker** defeated **Justin Credible** ... **Jay** & **Mark Briscoe** beat tag team champions **Dixie** & **Izzy** to win the title ... **Homicide** pinned **B.J. Whitmer** ... **Trent Acid** & **Johnny Kashmere** won a five-team tag team scramble cage match, beating **Joel** & **Jose Maximo**, **Jack Evans** & **Teddy Hart**, **Special K**, and **The Carnage Crew** ... **Steve Corino** and **C.M. Punk** simultaneously pinned **Christopher Daniels** in a non-title four-corners match also involving heavyweight champion **Samoa Joe** ... **A.J. Styles** defeated **American Dragon**.
(11-01-03)

—"Spotlight" photos by Joe Zanolle

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA

HUNTSVILLE—Southern Wrestling Alliance at the Scott High School: **Flex** pinned **The One Man Alabama Chain Gang** ... **Hayley Hatred** defeated **Sienna Blaze** by countout ... **Adam Antieum** pinned **Rico Guerrero** ... Cruiserweight champion **C.J. Summers** pinned **Hex Hatred** ... **Rage**, **Doink the Clown**, & **Eclipse** defeated **Diamond Studd** & **The Weapons of Mass Destruction**.
(11-29-03)

—Paul Ledbetter

CALIFORNIA

SAN FRANCISCO—WWE at the Cow Palace: **Lance Storm** & **Val Venis** defeated **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... **John Heidenreich** beat **Nick Dinsmore** ... **Trish Stratus** & **Lita** defeated **Molly Holly** & **Jazz** ... **Spike Dudley** defeated **Test** ... Raw tag team champions **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** ... **The Hurricane** pinned **Matt Hardy** after **Lita** interfered ... **Rico** pinned **Steven Richards** ... **Batista** & **Randy Orton** beat **Booker T** & **Maven** ... Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** beat **Christian** and **Chris Jericho** in a three-way match ... Raw champion **Bill Goldberg** defeated **Kane** by disqualification.
(11-29-03)

—Neil Winston

LOS ANGELES—WWE at the Staples Center: **Rey Misterio Jr.** pinned **Nunzio** ... **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Akio** & **Sakoda** ... **Sean O'Haire** pinned **Rhyno** ... **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** beat **Chuck Palumbo** & **Johnny Stamboli** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** beat **Ultimo Dragon** and **Jamie Noble** in a three-way match ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** by disqualification ... **Dawn Marie** beat **Sable** in a tiny teddy contest ... **Chris Benoit** & **Bradshaw** defeated **The Big Show**, **Nathan Jones**, & **Matt Morgan** in a handicap match ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** defeated **John Cena**.
(11-22-03)

—Chris Harrison

LOS ANGELES—Pro Wrestling Guerrilla at the Westside Jewish Center: **Topgun Talwar** & **The Ballard Brothers** beat **Lil' Cholo**, **Chris Bosh**, & **T.J. Perkins** ... **M-Dogg** pinned **Jardi Frantz** ... **Billy Kim** & **Scott Lost** beat **Disco Machine** & **Excalibur** ... **Super Dragon** defeated **Joey Ryan** ... **Adam Pearce** beat **Colt Cabana** ... **Samoa Joe** beat **C.M. Punk** ... Heavyweight champion **Frankie Kazarian** defeated **American Dragon**.
(11-15-03)

—Charles Mercury

CONNECTICUT

FAIRFIELD—Ring of Honor at Sacred Heart University: **Bison** & **Slugga** beat **The Solution** ... **Slyk Wagner Brown** pinned **Jimmy Cash** ... **Allison Danger** defeated **Stacy Stocks** ... **Hydro** & **Angeldust** defeated **The Ring Crew Express** ... **The Backseat Boyz** beat **The Outkast Killers** ... **The S.A.T.** won a four-team scramble match over the teams of **Hotstuff Hernandez** & **Fast Eddie**, **Special K**, and **The Carnage Crew** ... **Homicide** beat **John Walters** ... **Christopher Daniels** defeated **Jimmy Rave** ... **Josh Daniels** beat **Steve Corino** after **Homicide** interfered ... **Matt Stryker** beat **Xavier** ... **B.J. Whitmer** won a one-fall triangle match over **Dan Maff** and **Colt Cabana** ... Tag team champions **Jay** & **Mark Briscoe** beat **Samoa Joe** & **A.J. Styles** ... **C.M. Punk** beat **Raven** in a steel cage match.
(11-28-03)

—Timothy A. Walker

BRIDGEPORT—WWE at the Arena at Harbor Yard: **Eddie Guerrero** pinned **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Funaki** pinned **Horshu** ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** defeated **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Paul London** & **Spanky** ... **Dawn Marie** defeated **Sable** in a lingerie contest ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Rey Misterio Jr.** and **Nunzio** in a three-way match ... **Ultimo Dragon** & **Jamie Noble** beat **Akio** & **Sakoda** ... **Kurt Angle**, **Bradshaw**, & **Hardcore Holly** defeated **A-Train**, **Nathan Jones**, & **Matt Morgan** in an elimination match ... **John Cena** beat **Sean O'Haire** & **Rhyno** in a

Colt Cabana thought he had an advantage over Dan Maff in this match, but he was wrong. Maff managed to escape this move in relatively good shape and went on to win the match.

handicap match ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** pinned **Chris Benoit**.
(11-10-03)

—Ken Marten

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON—East Coast Wrestling Association at St. Matthew's Parish Hall: **Mike Kruel** defeated heavyweight champion **Christopher Daniels** to win the title ... **Billy Bax** & **Rob Eckos** defeated tag champs **Johnny** & **Joey Maxx** to win the title ... Mid-Atlantic champion **Prince Nana** wrestled **Mega** to a no-contest ... **Team 1614** defeated **Royal Decision** in a "War Games" match ... **Shaolin Wrecking Crew** won a "Run For The Gold" match against **Japanese Pool Boy** & **Nick Malakai**, **Freak Nastys**, **Inferno** & **Ruffhouse Rivera**, **Mozart Fontaine** & **Zaquary Springate III**, and **Less Resistance** ... **Cyco** and **Xero** wrestled to a double-disqualification ... **John Walters** defeated **American Dragon** ... **Inferno**, **Ruffhouse Rivera**, & **Big Benny** defeated **Mr. Ooh La La** & **Less Resistance**.
(11-08-03)

—Keith Bora

FLORIDA

ST. PETERSBURG—NWA Florida at the Arena: **Bruce Steele** pinned **Frankie Capone** ... **Cuban Assassin** & **Breyer Wellington** beat **Pretty Fly** & **Job Zout** ... **Mike Sullivan** pinned **Rod Steel** ... **CHAOS** won a three-way hardcore match over **Maximum Capacity** and **Havoc** ... **Justice** won a last-man-standing match against **Mikey Tenderfoot**, **Naphtali**, **David Babylon**, **David Mercury**, and **Stash** ... X champion **Roderick Strong** pinned **Lex Lovett** ... Tag champs **Mike** & **Todd Shane** beat **Mikey Batts** & **Eric Stevens** ... **Steve Madison** pinned heavyweight champion **Scoot Andrews** to win the title.
(11-22-03)

—Phil Bradley

DeBARY—Southern Championship Wrestling at the Civic Center: **Ryze** defeated **Kevin Divine** ... **Manny Montana** pinned **Tony Smith** ... **Thump Dupree** defeated **Sammy Sites** ... **Axis** & **Python** beat tag team champions **Dagon Briggs** & **Leon Scott** to win the title ... **Jason Hexx** defeated **Brian Gamble** ... **Chasyn Rance** beat **Aaron Epic** ... **Norman Smiley** defeated **David Mercury**
(11-15-03)

—Gerald Staub

GEORGIA

ROME—NAWA at Dillard's Music Park: **Jay Fury** beat **Lamar Phillips** ... **Icarus** beat **Little Will** and **Gabriel** in a three-way dance ... **Alabama Attitude** beat **Chris Kamikaze** & **Chit Martinez** ... **Justin Ramey** beat **Nick Halen** to retain the junior heavyweight title ... **Nemesis** & **Zero X** beat **Rick Michaels** & **Skeeter Frost** ... **Hardcore Properties** beat **Sean Tempers** & **Aaron Voight** ... **Onyx** vs. **Bulldog Raines** ended in a double-disqualification.
(11-29-03)

—Nathan Grisham

TOCCOA—IWA at the National Guard Armory: **Lance Christopher** defeated **Logan Kincayde** ... **Casey J** defeated **Bart Justice** in a loser-leaves-town match ... Internet champion **Tommy Sawyer** defeated **Phillip Pain** ... U.S. champion **Panhead Nelson** defeated **Tow Truck** ... **Executioner** defeated **Golden Eagle** ... **Don Matthews** & **The Tower** defeated **Rahn Jordan** & **James Boulevard** ... **Billy Starr** defeated **Purple Passion**, **Big Country**, & **The Corpse** in a handicap match.
(11-22-03)

—James Boulevard

ROH newcomer Nigel McGuinness continues to impress fans with his technical skill. He also made quite an impression on Tony Mamaluke by working over Mamaluke's leg.

AUGUSTA—WWE at the Civic Center: **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** beat **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** ... **Billy Kidman** pinned **Rhyno** ... **Sean O'Haire** & **Horshu** beat **Matt Cappotelli** & **John Hennigan** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Jamie Noble** and **Ultimo Dragon** in a three-way match ... **Chuck Palumbo**, **Nunzio**, & **Johnny Stamboli** beat **Orlando Jordan**, **Paul London**, & **Spanky** ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** pinned **John Cena** ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Dawn Marie** defeated **Torrie Wilson** and **Sable** in a bikini challenge ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** pinned **Chris Benoit**.
(10-27-03)

—Joseph Kalman

ALBANY—WWE at the James Gray Civic Center: **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** beat **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** ... **Billy Kidman** pinned **Rhyno** ... **Sean O'Haire** & **Horshu** beat **Matt Cappotelli** & **John Hennigan** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** beat **Ultimo Dragon** and **Jamie Noble** in a three-way match ... **Chuck Palumbo**, **Nunzio**, & **Johnny Stamboli** beat **Orlando Jordan**, **Paul London**, & **Spanky** ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** defeated **John Cena** ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Torrie Wilson** beat **Dawn Marie** and **Sable** in a bikini challenge ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** defeated **Chris Benoit**.
(10-26-03)

—Gloria Williams

ILLINOIS

MASON—National Wrestling Coalition at the Civic Center: Cruiserweight champion **Tommy Callaway** wrestled to a time-limit draw with **Kid Dragon** ... **Donny Six** beat **Edmond McGuire** ... **Black Death** & **The Intimidator** beat **Tony Storm** & **Wraith** ... **Maria Lopez** defeated ladies champion **Lady Vendetta** by disqualification ... **George the Animal Jr.** beat **Donny Six** ... **T-Bolt Baxton** defeated **Ax Stevens** ... Heavyweight champion **Lucky Dane** defeated **Steven Davis** in a no-disqualification match.
(11-08-03)

—Brad Smithson

INDIANA

HOLTON—Pro Wrestling Indiana at the Holton Gym: **Eric Draven** pinned **Ace** ... **The Stalker** beat **Ben Michaels** by countout ... **Brandon Hunter** beat **Mason the Mangler** by disqualification ... **Billy Maverick** & **Stacy Starr** beat **The Iraqi Express** ... **The Animal** beat **Rage** ... **Mason the Mangler** won a 12-man "Moondog" battle royal.
(11-30-03)

—Mikie Hawley

PATRIOT—Power Championship Wrestling at the Brown Gym: **Billy Maverick** defeated heavyweight champion **Quentin Towne** by submission in a non-title match ... **Brandon Hunter** pinned **The Rebel** ... **Mason the Mangler** beat **Hokie** & **Pokie** in a handicap match when the referee ruled that Hokie could not continue ... **Eric Draven** beat **Phobia** and **Blackrain** in a triple threat match ... **Ben Smith** & **Damien Demento** beat **Hawaii 5.0** by countout ... **Rage**, **Apollo**, **Maked Superstar**, and **Blade** wrestled to a no-contest in a four-corners match.
(11-28-03)

—Jim Munroe

PATRIOT—Power Championship Wrestling at the Brown Gym: **Billy Maverick** defeated **Kareem Malcom** by submission ... **Brandon Hunter** beat **The Rebel** by countout ... **Mason the Mangler** beat **The Blade Brothers** in a handicap match ... **Eric Draven** beat **Billy James** and **Jesse Southerland** in a triple threat match ... **Phobia** & **Black Rain** beat tag champs **Hawaii 5.0** to win the title.
(11-15-03)

—Jeff Davies

MADISON—Supreme Championship Wrestling at the Madison Township Fire Department: **Joey Moore** defeated **Adrain Scott** in a ladder match ...

Matt Stryker struggles to overcome veteran Justin Credible's grip. If Stryker continues to win big matches similar to this one, he'll soon be within title contention in ROH.

Eric Draven pinned **Simply Sweet** ... **Brandon Hunter** defeated **Troy Banks** by disqualification ... **The Dysfunctional Family** defeated **Spazz** and **Roger Blade** ... **Mason the Mangler** defeated **Brett Morris** ... **Billy Maverick** defeated **Grimm** in a loser-leaves-town match
(11-27-03)

—Jim Munroe

CROOSVILLE—Championship Wrestling at the Rec Center: **Cuban Assassin** beat **Ron Quik** ... **T.J. Phillips** beat **Masked Cuban Militia** ... **Beau James** beat **Tim Hall** ... **Beau James** & **Cuban Assassin** beat **Tim Hall** & **T.J. Phillips** for the tag title ... **Ivan Koloff** beat **Chuck Jones** in a Russian chain match.
(11-15-03)

—Fay Ferguson

INDIANAPOLIS—Ringside Wrestling Federation at St Philip Neri Catholic School: **Hillbilly Jed** won a three-way dance against **Ric Ravage** and **David Cropht** ... **Billy Bart** beat **Uncle Ernie** ... **T.J. Powers** & **Austin James** defeated **Shawn Cook** & **Marty Graw** ... **Bo Bo Brazil Jr.** pinned **The Bouncer** ... **Johnnie Walker** defeated **Guy Lombardo** in an "I quit" match.
(11-08-03)

—Randy Klemme

SALEM—IWA Mid-South's Ted Petty Invitational Tournament at the High School, second night: ***In quarterfinal matches:*** beat **Jimmy Jacobs** ... **Alex Shelley** beat **Jonny Storm** ... **Danny Daniels** beat **Jimmy Rave** ... **A.J. Styles** defeated **Jerry Lynn** ... **Chris Hero** beat **Sonjay Dutt** ... **B-Boy** beat **Nigel McGuinness** ... ***In semifinal matches:*** **Danny Daniels** beat **A.J. Styles** ... **Alex Shelley** beat **Ian Rotten** ... **Chris Hero** beat **B-Boy** ... ***Finals:*** **Danny Daniels** won a three-way elimination match against **Chris Hero** and **Alex Shelley** to win the tournament ... ***In non-tournament matches:*** **Mickie Knuckles** beat **Rain** ... **Ryan Boz** & **Brad Bradley** beat **Nate Webb** and **J.C. Bailey** ... **Colt Cabana** defeated **Michael Shane**, **Chris Sabin**, **MDogg-20**, **Ken Anderson**, and **Arik Cannon** in a six-way elimination match.
(11-08-03)

—Wayne McCarty

SALEM—IWA Mid-South's Ted Petty Invitational Weekend at the High School, first night: **Jimmy Jacobs** beat **Salvatore Rinauru** ... **Nigel McGuinness** beat **Brad Bradley** ... **Ian Rotten** beat **Mickie Knuckles** ... **A.J. Styles** beat **Todd Sexton** ... **Jonny Storm** beat **MDogg-20** ... Light heavyweight champ **Sonjay Dutt** beat **Nate Webb** ... **Chris Hero** beat **Arik Cannon** by submission ... **Alex Shelley** beat **Chris Sabin** by submission ... **B-Boy** beat **J.C. Bailey** ... **Jimmy Rave** beat **Colt Cabana** ... Heavyweight champ **Danny Daniels** beat **Ken Anderson** ... **Jerry Lynn** beat **Michael Shane**.
(11-07-03)

—Wayne McCarty

KENTUCKY

GEORGETOWN—Central Wrestling Alliance at the Convention Center: **Dick Dalton** defeated **J.T. Money** to win the Xtreme title ... **Terry Alan** defeated **El Diablo** ... **Shane Lewis** beat **Syxe** by reverse decision ... **Big Dog Barry** beat **Mongoose** by countout ... **Terry Alan**, **Maddawg**, & **Shane Lewis** defeated **J.T. Money**, **Cherry**, & **Jad T. Lungini**.
(11-23-03)

—Sophia Myers

SALYERSVILLE—NWA Bluegrass at the Community Center: Junior heavyweight champion **Eric Darkstorm** defeated **Shane Matthews** and **Brett Sharp** in a three-way match ... NWA junior heavyweight champion **Chris Draven** defeated **Ian Killjoy** ... **Jake Layton** defeated **The New Assassin I** ... **The Beautiful People** defeated tag team champions **The Redneck Express** to win the title.
(11-22-03)

—Frank Miller

CENTRAL CITY—Bad 2 The Bone Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: Heavyweight champion **Vic the Bruiser** pinned **Apollo** in a bounty match ... **Simon Sezz** pinned **Kid Jason** ... **Billy Black** pinned **Big Bubba** ... **Chuck Steele** defeated **Todd Morton** ... **Suji Yakamura** beat **Miss Jade** ... Heavyweight champion **Vic the Bruiser** defeated **Showtime** by disqualification in a bounty match.
(11-08-03)

—Joe Bailey

GLASGOW—Metro Wrestling Alliance at the National Guard Armory: **The Blaster** & **Mystery Man** defeated **Dane Shadows** & **David Black** ... **Mongoose** defeated **Jad T. Lungini** ... **Kliff Hanger** beat **The Amazing Pooky** ... **Billy Maverick** defeated **Jeff Crowe** ... Heavyweight champion **The Miami Thug** defeated **Bryan Blade**.
(11-08-03)

—Billy Sands

LOUISIANA

PRAIRIEVILLE—MSCW's finale at the Mayons Building: **Vito Buttafuoco** pinned **Road Rage** ... **Joey Homegrown** & **Bonez** beat **Mexican Giant** & **Jordan Espinoza** ... **Korey Anthony** beat **Stan Sweetan** ... **Bryan Hart** defeated **T.K. Riot** ... Heavyweight champion **Blade Boudreaux** pinned **Minotaur**.
(11-08-03)

—Boyd Bradford

MASSACHUSETTS

FALL RIVER—SCCW at the P.A.L Hall: A four-way bout between lightweight champ **Kreeper**, **Derek Destiny**, **C.J. Summers**, and **Mike Majors** ended in a no-contest ... Tag team champs **G.Q. Smooth** & **Gino Giovanni** beat **The Widowmaker** & **Donnie Rotten** ... Heavyweight champ **Johnny Angel** defeated **Chris Blackheart** ... Coastal champion **Mark Damon** defeated **Mike Stryker** ... **Troy Bond** defeated **Matt** ... **Troy Bond** defeated **Trinity H. Campbell** ... **Nick Narcisstic** beat **Verge**.
(11-21-03)

—Adam Lash

NEW BEDFORD—Yankee Pro Wrestling at the New Top Rope Arena: **HiLite Kid** defeated **Jon Thornhill** ... **Tex McCoy** & **Paul Lombardi** defeated **Alex Payne** & **Redemption** ... **Jason the Slasher** defeated **Mr. Wrestling IV** ... **Michael Foster** defeated **Mathmatico** ... A triple threat match between **Riot**, **Billy Braxx**, and **Kid Pyro** ended in a no-contest ... Interstate champ **Vain** defeated **Moco** by disqualification ... **The Regime** & **The Premier Experience** defeated **X Foundation** & **The McGraws** ... **Nick Steel** & **Commissioner Candido** defeated **Brickhouse Baker** & **Lance Silva**.
(11-15-03)

—Janelle Solomon

FRAMINGHAM—New England Championship Wrestling at the Framingham Civic League: **Johnny Idol** beat **Mike Bennett** ... **Ru Star** beat **El Boriqua** ... **Mercedes Martinez** beat **Nikki Roxx** by disqualification ... **Mike Osbourne** & **Steve Bradley** wrestled **Alex Arion** & **Antonio Thomas** to a double-disqualification ... **Zaqary Springate III** beat **Frankie Arion** ... Tag team champions **Sabotage** beat **Adrenaline** ... Heavyweight champion **Maverick Wild** beat **Bob Evans** in a submission match
(11-14-03)

—Allen Lauretti

METHUEN—Chaotic Wrestling at the Knights of Columbus Hall: **Brian Buffet** beat **Vince Vicallo** ... New England champion **Arch Kincaid** beat **Handsome Johnny** ... **Dr. Heresy** & **Andre Lyonz** beat **Matthew Evagrius** & **Peter Mulloy** ... Heavyweight champion **Billy Kryptonite** beat **Adam Booker** ... **Luis Ortiz** beat **Brian Black** ... **John Walters** beat **Dukes Dalton**.
(11-14-03)

—Rich Palladino

WORCESTER—WWE at the Centrum Centre: **Eddie Guerrero** pinned **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** defeated **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **Funaki** pinned **Horshu** ... **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** defeated **Paul London** & **Spanky** ... **John Cena** defeated **Sean O'Haire** & **Rhyno** in a handicap match ... **Jamie Noble** & **Ultimo Dragon** beat **Akio** & **Sakoda** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Nunzio** and **Rey Misterio Jr.** in a three-way match ... **Kurt Angle**, **Bradshaw**, &

Hardcore Holly defeated **A-Train**, **Nathan Jones**, & **Matt Morgan** in an elimination match ... **Dawn Marie** defeated **Sable** in a bikini challenge ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** pinned **Chris Benoit**.
(11-09-03)

—Bryan Best

SPRINGFIELD—WWE at the Civic Center: **Lance Storm** & **Val Venis** defeated **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** and **Kevin Fertig** & **Travis Tomko** in a three-way match ... **Batista** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Steven Richards** pinned **Rico** ... **Rene Dupree** defeated **The Hurricane** ... **Lita** & **Trish Stratus** beat **Molly Holly** & **Gail Kim** (**Victoria** was the guest referee) ... **Randy Orton** pinned **Maven** ... **Booker T**, **Rob Van Dam**, & **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Chris Jericho**, **Christian**, **Scott Steiner**, & **Mark Henry** in an elimination match ... **Shane McMahon** defeated **Kane** in a steel cage match.
(11-08-03)

—Gary Coates

MICHIGAN

BELLEVILLE—Insane Wrestling Federation & Border City Wrestling at the Diamondback: **The Hacker** & **Gutter** beat **Petey Williams** & **A-1** to retain the BCW tag team title ... **Chris Clontz** beat **Mike Legacy** ... IWF cruiserweight champion **Alex Shelley** beat **Hayden Avery** and **Jimmy Jacobs** in a three-way dance ... **The Necro Butcher** beat **J.C. Bailey** ... **The Original Sinn** beat **Joe E. Legend** by disqualification ... **Joe E. Legend** & **Conrad Kennedy III** beat **Konnan** & **Original Sinn** ... **Johnny Bravo** beat **Jaime D** ... BCW TV champion **Chris Sabin** beat **Johnny Devine** ... IWF tag team champs **Corporal Robinson** & **DBA** beat **Mr. Insanity** & **Deranged** ... BCW champ **Shane Douglas** beat **Raven**.
(11-23-03)

—Holly Lengyel

GRAND RAPIDS—All World Wrestling League at the Delta Plex: **Alcatraz** beat **Willie Richardson** ... **Big Vito Malone** beat **Stryc9** ... **Mr. Excitement** beat **Buddy Hanlon** ... **Norm** beat **Bulldog Maynard** ... **Julian the Warlock** beat **A.L. Vision** ... **Miss Olympia** beat **Curtis Martin** ... **Rocky Cannon** beat **Big Vito Malone** ... **Randy West** beat **Shauna Doyle** in a paddle-on-a-pole match ... TV champ **Gorilla Barone** beat **Soulman Carter** ... **The Hollywood Hustlas** beat **The Hot Scotts** in an elimination match ... **Big Jake** beat **Mr. Excitement** in a brass knuckles ladder match ... **Mr. Hughes** beat **Monty Brown** by disqualification ... **Shafee** wrestled **The Unknown Commentator** to a no-contest ... **Sabu** beat **Kevin Sullivan** in a Chicago death match.
(11-23-03)

—Aaron McMann

DETROIT—WWE at Joe Louis Arena: **The Hurricane** & **Rosey** defeated **Tommy Dreamer** & **The Brooklyn Brawler** ... **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** defeated **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... **Mark Henry** beat **Val Venis** ... **Christian** & **Lita** defeated **Matt Hardy** & **Molly Holly** ... **Chris Jericho** defeated **Maven** ... **The Hurricane** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Scott Steiner** & **Test** ... Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Kane** by disqualification ... **Booker T** & **Goldberg** beat **Batista**, **Triple-H**, & **Randy Orton** in a handicap match.
(11-21-03)

—Mike Randolph

WARREN—Independent Wrestling Revolution at the Warren YMCA: **Kamikaze** beat **Tommy Johnson** ... **Gavin Starr** beat **Klunk the Klown** ... **Eddie Venom** beat **Andy Muscat** ... **The Bump -N- Uglies** beat **Jimmy Shalwin** & **Bobby Bambino** ... **The Human Spider** wrestled **Super Meetsee** to a no-contest ... **Gutter** beat **Anthony Rivera** & **Truth Martini** in a handicap match ... **Frankie the Face** beat **Conrad Kennedy III** ... Heavyweight champion **N8 Mattson** beat **Jaimy Coxxx**.
(11-15-03)

—Aaron McMann

WARREN—Xtreme Intense Championship Wrestling at the Hot Rocks Sports Bar & Music Cafe: Cruiserweight champion **Danny Daniels** beat **Jimmy Jacobs**, **Gutter**, and **Joey Pink** in a fatal four-way match ... **Devil's Venom** beat **Agony** & **Apocalypse** ... **Roughouse R.O.B.** beat **Kamikaze** ... **Jaimy Coxxx** beat **Silas Young** ... **Alex Shelly** beat **Gavin Starr** ... Intense champion **Ryan Boz** beat **Mr. Insanity** ... Tag champs **DBA** & **Corporal Robinson** beat **Mike T.S.G.** & **Deranged**.
(11-09-03)

—Aaron McMann

REDFORD—Power Wrestling Alliance at the Detroit World Outreach: **The Hacker** beat **Eric Young** ... **Joe E. Legend** beat **A-1** ... **Petey Williams** beat **Johnny Ova** in a ladder match ... **Road Warrior Animal** & **Sting** beat **Greg Valentine** & **Buff Bagwell**.
(11-14-03)

—Aaron McMann

MISSOURI

ST. CLAIR—Midwest Powerhouse Wrestling at the Knights of Columbus: ***Tournament of Greed, quarterfinals:*** **Damien Blade** pinned **Christian Haze** ... **The Searcher** beat **Tony Angel** ... **Agent C** defeated **The Crocodile Kid** ... **Agent U** beat **Chico Es Loco** ... ***Semifinals***: **Damien Blade** beat **The Searcher** ... **Agent U** defeated **Agent C** ... ***Finals:*** **Damien Blade** beat **Agent U** to win the tournament ... ***In non-tournament matches:*** **The Hollywood Stud** and **Jason Wells** wrestled to a double-disqualification ... **Trinity** beat **Jaden**.
(11-08-03)

—Chip Leffler

ST. LOUIS—Gateway Championship Wrestling at Aggie's Banquet Hall: **Trainee 11** defeated **Thunder Bolt** ... **Makaze** defeated **Jackal** ... **Kevin Sharp** beat **Super Castaldi I** ... **Team Trainee** defeated **Double Negative** ... **Cabal** beat **Jeremy** ... **Christopher Walken** defeated **Heart Attack Jack** ... **Chaz Wesson** beat **Matt Sydal** ... **Outtkast** defeated **Jynx** ... **Big Bad Ben** defeated **Pete Madden** ... **Kory Twist** & **Nikki Strychnine** won a triple threat tag team elimination match against **Diabolic Khaos** and **Dingo** & **Daizee Haze**.
(11-07-03)

—Dorian Sinclair

NEVADA

LAS VEGAS—WWE at the Thomas & Mack Center: **Val Venis** & **Lance Storm** beat **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... **John Heidenreich** pinned **Nick Dinsmore** ... **Lita** & **Trish Stratus** beat **Molly Holly** & **Jazz** ... **Spike Dudley** pinned **Test** ... Raw tag team champions **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** ... **Steven Richards** pinned **Rico** ... **The Hurricane** beat **Matt Hardy** ... **Batista** & **Randy Orton** beat **Booker T** & **Maven** ... Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** beat **Chris Jericho** and **Christian** in a three-way match ... Raw champion **Bill Goldberg** beat **Kane** by disqualification.
(11-28-03)

—Craig McDowell

NEW JERSEY

CLIFTON—Millennium 2000 Promotions at St. John Kanty: **Troy Nelson** beat **Matt Nelson** ... **The Banditos** beat **Dan De Man** & **Black Angel** ... **Devon Storm** beat **Harry Acropulus** in a hardcore match ... **Deliciously Hot** beat **Chocolate Milk** ... **Spiral** beat **Justin Cage** in a ladder match ... **Johnny Ova** beat **Jason Static** ... **Miss Kara** beat **Serena** ... **Jay Chronic** beat **Damian Dragon** ... **Inferno** beat **Warpath** ... **Little T** beat **Little Tiger** ... **Nikolai Volkoff** beat **Mobutu**.
(11-28-03)

—Kelly Richards

WEST PATERSON—IWF at the IWF Arena: Tag team champions **Eloy Fiesta** & **Biggie Biggs** beat **Shane O'Brien** & **Erik Andretti** ... **Roman** defeated **Travis Blake** ... Junior heavyweight champion **Dan McGuire** pinned **Jay Blaze** ... **Brandon Young** beat American champion **Shawn Donavan**

Mark and Jay Briscoe certainly have double-team moves mastered. That might be due in part to their new manager, Jim Cornette.

Despite Homicide's reputation as a good brawler, he is technically sound enough to get himself out of hairy situations. B.J. Whitmer couldn't contain Homicide for long with this surfboard.

to win the title ... **Vik Voorhees**, **Tony Torres**, & **Chris Steeler** beat **Aaron Stride**, **David Delgado**, & **Sean Royal** ... Heavyweight champion **Fred Sampson** pinned **Kevin Knight** (**Dr. Tom Prichard** was the special guest referee).
(11-22-03)

—Dorothy Podsvirow

NEW YORK

QUEENS—USA Pro Wrestling at Elks Lodge: **Fred Sampson** defeated **Tommy Trouble** ... **Papalicious** won the invitational King of the Young Guns Elks match ... **The Christopher Street Connection** defeated **The Solution** ... **Los Lunatics** became the first six-man triad titleholders, defeating **Trailer Park Trash**, **Elm Street Kids**, and **Rob Fury**, **Envy**, and **Jimmy Hustler** ... **M-Tizzle** beat **Prince Nana** ... **Low-Ki** defeated **Sonjay Dutt** ... **Mike Kruel** defeated **Devon Storm** ... **Masked Maniac** defeated **Ken Sweeney** ... **Louie Ramos** won a hardcore match, defeating **Johnny Bravado**, **The New Dynamite Kid**, and **Danny Demanto** ... **Deranged** retained the X-treme title, defeating **Johnny Ova** and **Dan Barry** ... **Mikey** & **Wayne** beat **The Dirty Rotten Scoundrels** ... **Mahoney** defeated **Axl Rotten** in a hardcore challenge ... **Chris Candido** & **Bam Bam Bigelow** defeated **Simon Diamond** & **Matt Stryker** ... **Shane Douglas** defeated **The Sandman** ... Heavyweight champ **Raven** defeated **Al Snow**.
(11-29-03)

—Anthony DeBlasi

POUGHKEEPSIE—WWE at the Mid-Hudson Civic Center: Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** defeated **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **Ultimo Dragon** beat **Nunzio** ... **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Horshu** & **Sean O'Haire** ... **Akio** & **Sakoda** beat **Paul London** & **Spanky** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Jamie Noble** ... **Eddie Guerrero** defeated **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Chris Benoit**, **Bradshaw**, & **Hardcore Holly** defeated **A-Train**, **Nathan Jones**, & **Matt Morgan** in an elimination match ... **Sable** defeated **Dawn Marie** in a bikini challenge ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** defeated **John Cena** in a streetfight.
(11-08-03)

—Jim Irwin

NORTH CAROLINA

GASTONIA—Championship Wrestling Alliance at the National Guard Armory: **Nathan Yost** beat **Shawn Hardy** for the light heavyweight title in a mop sign-on-a-pole match ... **Mr. High Fly** pinned **Xcaliber** ... Heavyweight champion **T Biggs** beat **All-American** ... **Scotty Rocker** beat **The Lumbee Warrior** ... **Body Count** beat **Jeremy Hunter** and **The Kamikaze Kid** ... Extreme champ **Big Country** beat **Rowdy James** and **The Xtreme Superstar** in a triple threat match.
(11-29-03)

—Kristen Isaac

HOLLY RIDGE—ICW Pro Wrestling at Dixon High School: **Malachi** beat **Leo Alure** ... **J. Marcus Lawson** & **Chris Deal** beat **Dream Lovers** ... **Solitude** beat **Steve Michaels** ... **DJ P-Roc** beat **Zane Dawson** ... **Leo Alure** beat **Cage** ... Tag champs **The Anti Hero League** beat **Bobby Austin** & **Farmer Funk** ... **Marc Ash** beat **Trailer Park Heat** ... **Dark Starr** beat heavyweight champion **Duke Richards** to win the title ... **Duke Richards** won a battle royal.
(11-22-03)

—Marcus Watkins

ELKIN—AIWF at the Armory: **Chance** won a three-way dance against **Insane Shane** and **Bloodlust** ... **Fear** defeated **The Jackal** ... **Ray Idol** & **Smooth** defeated **Robbie Evil** & **The Scorpion** ... **Big Daddy** defeated **Big Country** in a hair vs. career match ... **Midnight Mauler** & **Johnny Blast** wrestled **The War Machines** to a double-countout ... **Azeral** defeated U.S. champ **Chapel** to win the title ... **Major Havoc** defeated sovereign champ **Chris Deal** to win the title ... **Robert Roma** defeated heavyweight champ **Creeping Death** to win the title.
(11-15-03)

—David Webb

BUTNER—Southern Championship Wrestling at the Middle School Gym: **Jeff Jaze** beat **Trash Can Man** ... **Duke Richards** beat **Marc Ash** ... **Spank** beat **Cyrus** ... **Trailer Park Heat** beat **Scab** in a bullrope match ... **Matt Stryker** beat **Brad Attitude** ... **Seymour Snott** & **Dexter Poindexter** beat **Shawn Alexander** & **Brad Hunter** to win the tag team title ... Heavyweight champion **C.W. Anderson** beat **Otto Schwanz**.
(11-07-03)

—Gregory Mosorjak

OHIO

CLEVELAND—Cleveland All Pro Wrestling at Jimmy's in the Flats: **The Bouncer** defeated **Nick Ritters** ... **Canadian Bad Boy** defeated **Johnny Blaze** ... **Basketnazi** beat **Nemesis** and **Grady** in a triple threat match ... **Dick Nasty** defeated **Squintz** ... **Carnage** defeated **Ernie Ballz** ... **Aero** defeated **Jason Turner** ... **Nikita Allanov** defeated **Dash Bennett** ... **Tyson Bishop** defeated **Dios Salvador** in a 30-minute "Ironman" match ... **Ray Right** defeated **DisCole Fever** ... Heavyweight champion **Adam Cage** and TV champion **Jason Bane** wrestled to a double-disqualification in a title vs. title match.
(11-28-03)

—Wally Matthews

PAINESVILLE—New Era Pro Wrestling at Laura's Roller Emporium: **AERO** defeated **Sean Styles** ... **The Bouncer** defeated **J.T. Lightning** ... **The Deviant** beat **Sneakee Pete** ... **Krazy Kid Bielik** defeated **Carlton Kaz** ... **Extreme Violence** defeated **The Shooting Stars** ... **Al B. Damm** & **Da Munchies** defeated **Blackhammer**, **DisCole Fever**, & **Adam Cage** ... **Richard Weede** beat **J-Rocc** to win the triple crown title.
(11-08-03)

—Glen Silas

COLUMBUS—WWE at the Nationwide Arena: **The Hurricane** & **John Heidenreich** defeated **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... Raw tag team champions **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** ... **Batista** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Lita** defeated **Jazz** & **Victoria** in a handicap match after her partner, **Jacquelyn**, abandoned her ... **Lance Storm** & **Val Venis** defeated **Travis Tomko** & **Kevin Fertig** ... **Mark Henry** pinned **Maven** ... Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** pinned **Chris Jericho** ... **Booker T** defeated **Ric Flair** & **Randy Orton** in a handicap match ... **Shane McMahon** defeated **Kane** in a steel cage match.
(11-02-03)

—Samantha Moran

TOLEDO—WWE at the Sports Arena: **The Hurricane** & **John Heidenreich** beat **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... Raw tag team champions **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** defeated **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** ... **Batista** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Mark Henry** pinned **Lance Storm** ... **Lita** beat **Jazz** & **Victoria** in a handicap match after her tag team partner, **Jacquelyn**, turned against her and abandoned her ... **Randy Orton** pinned **Booker T** ... **Maven** & **Val Venis** beat **Travis Tomko** & **Kevin Fertig** ... Intercontinental champion

Rob Van Dam defeated **Chris Jericho** ... **Shane McMahon** beat **Kane** in a steel cage match.
(11-01-03)

—Rich Bowan

OKLAHOMA

TULSA—Steel Rage Pro Wrestling at Mickey's: **Bloated Floaters** beat **X-Cal** & **Devon Monroe** ... **Luc Lapointe** beat **Big Daddy Moore** for the hardcore title ... **Big John O'Malley** beat **Luc Lapointe** for the hardcore title ... **The Prophet** beat **Brandon Bishop** ... **Ian St. James** wrestled **Dexter Hardaway** to a no-contest ... **Slater Vain** beat **Trey Christian** ... **Slater Vain** beat **X-Cal** ... Tag team champions **Ian St. James** & **The Original Renegade** beat **Northern Threat** ... Heavyweight champion **Brandon Groom** beat **Christopher Matthews**
(11-22-03)

—Sally Wilcox

OREGON

PORTLAND—WWE at the Rose Garden Arena: **Rey Misterio Jr.** defeated **Nunzio** ... **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Akio** & **Sakoda** ... **Sean O'Haire** pinned **Rhyno** ... **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** beat **Chuck Palumbo** & **Johnny Stamboli** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Jamie Noble** and **Ultimo Dragon** in a three-way match ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Chris Benoit** & **Bradshaw** beat **The Big Show, Nathan Jones,** & **Matt Morgan** in a handicap match ... **Dawn Marie** beat **Sable** in a tiny teddy contest ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** pinned **John Cena**.
(11-23-03)

—Andrew Flemming

PENNSYLVANIA

PUNXSUTAWNEY—RAH Wrestling's "Diceman V" card at the Community Center: **Gran Akuma** & **Icarus** defeated **Eddie Kingston** & **Rorschach** ... **Kidd Country** defeated **Demolition Mauler** in a last-man-standing match ... **Brock Singleton** pinned **Kasanova Kato** in a blindfold match ... **Princess Jade** pinned **Tony Newberry Jr.** in a spanking match ... **Dr. Feelgood** and **Zubov** wrestled to a draw in a dice-on-a-pole match ... **The New York Assassins** won a 15-team battle royal to win the tag team title ... **Zubov** won a five-way match, beating **Kidd Country**, **Dr. Feelgood**, **Sheik-Abdul Hassan**, and **Brock Singleton** to win the Diceman Cup and the heavyweight title.
(11-29-03)

—Matt Bish

McKEESPORT—NWA East at the Sportatorium: **Daron Smythe** pinned **Nikita Allanov** to advance to the five-way elimination match ... **Scott Venom** and **Dash Bennett** wrestled to a no-contest ... **Kid Cupid** beat **Lance Dayton** to advance **Bigg** to the five-way elimination match ... **Mad Mike** defeated **Jason Cage** to advance to the five-way elimination match ... **Devin Devine** beat **Paul Atlas** to advance to the five-way elimination match ... **Brian Anthony** defeated **Blitzz** by disqualification to retain the brass knuckles title ... Heavyweight champion **Justin Idol** retained the championship after referees ruled the five-way elimination match a no-contest.
(11-22-03)

—Pat James

MOON TOWNSHIP—International Wrestling Cartel at the IWC Arena: **Dean Radford** pinned **Carlton Kaz** ... **J.T. Rodgers** & **Troy Lords** beat **Eric Xtasy** & **Jimmy Jacobs** ... **Shark Boy** pinned **Aero** ... Tag team champions **Matt Cross** & **Glenn Spectre** beat **Dunn** & **Marcos** and **Devil Bhudakahn** & **Jake Garrett** in a three-way dance ... **Chris Sabin** pinned **A.J. Styles** ... **Alex Shelley** defeated **Super Hentai** ... **Shane Douglas** & **Mike Preston** beat **Bubba the Bulldog** & **Jimmy Vegas** ... Heavyweight champion **Sterling Keenan** defeated **Dennis Gregory**.
(11-22-03)

—Joe Dombrowski

JOHNSTOWN—Far North Wrestling at the Westmont Hilltop Community Center: **Hallowicked** defeated **Jolly Roger** ... **Dean Jablonski** pinned **Lord Zoltan** ... **The Honky Tonk Man** pinned **Powerhouse Hughes** ... Heavyweight champion **T. Rantula** beat **Adam O** in a hardcore match ... **Dennis Gregory** defeated **Dr. Feelgood** ... **Phoenix** won a triangle match beat **Kevin Grace** and **Joey Knight** to win the vacant cruiserweight title ... **Gran Akuma, Icarus,** & **Mike Quackenbush** defeated **The Wild Cards** & **Jigsaw**.
(11-16-03)

—Pete Phillips

PHILADELPHIA— Combat Zone Wrestling at Viking Hall: **Rockin' Rebel** & **Derek Frazier** defeated **Ruckus** & **Sonjay Dutt** ... **Jude, D.J. Hyde,** & **Niles Young** defeated **Cory Kastle, Jon Dahmer,** & **Sabian** ... **Tony Mamaluke** beat **Scotty Matthews** by submission ... **Azrieal** defeated **Deranged** ... **The Dirty Rotten Scoundrelz** defeated **Z Barr** & **Nick Berk** ... **Jimmy Rave** defeated **B-Boy** in sudden death overtime of a 15-minute "Ironman" match ... **Mercedes Martinez** defeated **Nikki Roxx** ... Ironman champion **Trent Acid** defeated **Danny Maff** ... **Chris Hero** defeated **Homicide, Jimmy Jacobs,** and **Alex Shelley** ... **Messiah** & **Nate Hatred** and **W-Beater** & **Nick Gage** wrestled to a no-contest in a double-dog-collar match.
(11-15-03)

—Rebecca Morris

SOUTH CAROLINA

FLORENCE—WWE at the Civic Center: **Booker T** defeated **Randy Orton** in a best-of-three-falls match ... **The Hurricane** & **Rosey** beat **Travis Tomko** & **Kevin Fertig** ... **Mark Henry** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Ivory** & **Lita** beat **Molly Holly** & **Gail Kim** ... Raw tag team champions **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** in a table match ... **Maven** defeated **Scott Steiner** ... **Lance Storm** & **Val Venis** beat **Steven Richards** & **Rico** ... Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** beat **Chris Jericho**.
(10-26-03)

—Ray Frantz

TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Low-Ki** defeated **Christopher Daniels** and **Kid Kash** in a three-way match ... **Shane Douglas** & **Michael Shane** beat **Sonjay Dutt** & **Chris Sabin** ... **X** pinned **Don Harris** ... **Chris Harris** & **James Storm** beat **Glenn Gilberti** & **David Young** and **Simon Diamond** & **Johnny Swinger** in a three-way match ... **Abyss, Legend,** & **Kevin Northcutt** beat **Raven, Julio Dinero,** & **C.M. Punk** ... NWA heavyweight champion **Jeff Jarrett** pinned **A.J. Styles**.
(12-03-03)

—Frank Miller

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Kid Kash** pinned **Low-Ki** ... **Abyss** pinned **Shark Boy** ... **Chris Sabin** pinned **X** ... **Raven** defeated **Legend** ... **Raven** wrestled to a no-contest with **Kevin Northcutt** ... NWA-TNA X champion **Michael Shane** pinned **Sonjay Dutt** ... **B.G. James, Ron Killings,** & **Konnan** defeated **Simon Diamond, Glenn Gilberti,** & **Johnny Swinger** to win the held-up NWA tag team title ... NWA heavyweight champion **Jeff Jarrett** wrestled to a no-contest with **Dusty Rhodes** in a lumberjack match.
(11-26-03)

—Frank Miller

ROH tag team scramble matches are usually exciting enough without the addition of the platforms on the top corners of the cage. All five teams used them to make their aerial moves doubly spectacular.

Steve Corino knows how to get under the skin of any opponent, fan, and even some of his friends. Here, "The King Of Old School" grounds Christopher Daniels with a vicious old school figure-four leglock. Sure, it's a little outdated as a finisher, but it still hurts like hell.

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Raven**, **The Sandman**, & **Erik Watts** defeated **Legend**, **Kevin Northcutt**, & **Ryan Wilson** in a "Clockwork Orange House Of Fun" match ... **Kid Kash** pinned **Shark Boy** ... **Julio Dinero** & **C.M. Punk** beat **Ekmo Fatu** & **Sonny Siaki** ... **Chris Sabin** pinned **David Young** in three seconds, but **Glenn Gilberti** demanded that Sabin give Young an immediate rematch. Sabin agreed and pinned Young again ... NWA tag team champions **Simon Diamond** & **Johnny Swinger** wrestled to a no-contest with **B.G. James** & **Ron Killings** when both teams scored a pin simultaneously. As a result, the title was held up ... **Sonjay Dutt** defeated **Christopher Daniels** and **X** in a three-way match ... **A.J. Styles** pinned **Abyss**.
(11-19-03)

—Liz Hunter

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Ron Killings** won a 10-man gauntlet match, last pinning **James Storm**, thus earning a shot at the NWA tag team title for him and his chosen partner (**B.G. James**) ... **Christopher Daniels** pinned **Low-Ki** ... **Sonjay Dutt** pinned **Chad Collyer** ... **Abyss** pinned **Don Harris** ... **Kevin Northcutt** & **Ryan Wilson** defeated **Raven** & **The Sandman** ... **Sting** & **A.J. Styles** beat **Jeff Jarrett** & **Lex Luger**.
(11-12-03)

—Will Welsh

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Julio Dinero** & **C.M. Punk** beat **Kid Kash** & **Lazz** ... **Shane Douglas** pinned **The Sandman** ... **Sonny Siaki** & **Ekmo Fatu** defeated **Chris Harris** & **James Storm** ... **X** won a battle royal ... **B.G. James** & **Ron Killings** beat **Glenn Gilberti** & **David Young** ... **Raven** defeated **Jim Mitchell** in a last-man-standing match ... **Sting** defeated NWA heavyweight champion **Jeff Jarrett** by disqualification.
(11-05-03)

—Frank Miller

NASHVILLE—NWA-TNA pay-per-view at the Fairgrounds Coliseum: **Chris Harris** & **James Storm** defeated **Glenn Gilberti** & **David Young** ... NWA-TNA X champion **Michael Shane** defeated **Sonjay Dutt** in a non-title match ... **Don Harris** & **Erik Watts** beat **Kevin Northcutt** & **Ryan Wilson** ... **Sonny Siaki** & **Ekmo Fatu** beat **Danny Doring** & **Roadkill** ... **Kid Kash** defeated **Abyss** in a chair-on-a-pole first-blood match ... **Raven** defeated **Vampiro** in a hanging match ... NWA heavyweight champion **Jeff Jarrett** pinned **Hacksaw Duggan** ... **Rick Steiner** defeated NWA heavyweight champion **Jeff Jarrett** by disqualification.
(10-29-03)

—Frank Miller

SPARTA—Middle Tennessee Wrestling Association at the White County Fairgrounds: **Josiah Kane** beat **Ryan Jefferies** by disqualification ... **Mad Dog** beat **Big Daddy Kane** ... **Adam Strange** defeated **Dirty White Boy** to become U.S. champion ... **John Matrix** won a three-way match against **Devil Dog** and **Shawn Sensation** ... Light heavyweight champion **Trent Richards** beat **Hardrock Higdon** ... Tag team champs **J.B. Thunder** & **Apollo** defeated **Robert Mulligan** & **Jail Break** ... Heavyweight champ **Lord Frost** pinned **Mike Promo**.
(11-14-03)

—Frank Miller

KINGSPORT—Southern States Wrestling at the National Guard Armory: **T.J. Phillips** beat **Cuban Assassin** ... **Justin Sensation** beat **Cuban Militia** ... Junior heavyweight champion **Tony Givens** wrestled **Josh Cody** to a draw ... **Rick Morton** & **Lexie Fyfe** beat **Beau James** & **Chuck Jones** ... **Ray Idol** won a battle royal.
(11-13-03)

—Frank Miller

TEXAS

TYLER—Southwest Premier Wrestling at the Skateplex: **Khan** beat **Joey Titan** ... **Jeff Brown** wrestled **Jerry Brown** to a no-contest ... **Adam Arson** defeated **Seth Shai** ... **Hallowmass** defeated **Trailer Park Trash** and **The New Legacy** in a three-way match to win the NWA Southwest tag team title ... SPW champion **Gemini** beat **John Allen**.
(11-26-03)

—Jason Rand

CROSBY—Christian Wrestling Federation at Crosby Church: **Wes Word** pinned light heavyweight champion **MACE** to win the title ... **Jeremy Young** defeated **Chris Idol** ... **Devastator** & **Caprice Coleman** defeated **Scottie Wrenn** & **Tim Storm** ... **Jeremy Young**, **Wes Word**, & **Caprice Coleman** wrestled **Tim Storm**, **MACE**, & **Scottie Wrenn** to a no-decision.
(11-23-03)

—Travis McKeon

ARLINGTON—Professional Championship Wrestling at the PCW Arena: **Justin 2 Fine** won a battle royal ... **Chris Stevens** beat **G-Slice** ... **B.J. Cummings** pinned **C-Diddy** (with **Justin 2 Fine**, as special referee, making a very quick three-count) ... TV champion **Jared Steele** pinned **Steve DeMarco**.
(11-22-03)

—Ron Henrich

DENTON—Xtreme Championship Wrestling at the XCW Arena: **Scott Phoenix** pinned **Officer Scott** ... **Drunk Adam** beat **Gemini** by disqualification ... **Jeff** & **Jerry Brown** beat **Kit Carson** & **Khris Germany** by disqualification ... TV champion **Bullman Downs** beat **The Security Guy** ... **John Allen** won a triple threat match against **El Convicto** and **Aldo Nova**.
(11-21-03)

—Scott Phoenix

HIDALGO—WWE at the Dodge Arena: **Rikishi**, **Scotty Too Hotty**, & **Spanky** beat **Chuck Palumbo**, **Nunzio**, & **Johnny Stamboli** ... **Shannon Moore** pinned **Kanyon** ... **Rhyno** pinned **Paul London** ... **Orlando Jordan** pinned **Sean O'Haire** ... **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** defeated **Akio** & **Sakoda** ... **Dawn Marie** defeated **Sable** in a lingerie contest ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** defeated **Jamie Noble** and **Ultimo Dragon** in a three-way match ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** defeated **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** by disqualification ... **Chris Benoit**, **John Cena**, **Hardcore Holly**, & **Rey Misterio Jr.** defeated **A-Train**, **The Big Show**, **Brock Lesnar**, **Nathan Jones**, & **Matt Morgan** in a handicap match.
(11-17-03)

—Marty Cermak

VERMONT

BURLINGTON—WWE at the Memorial Auditorium: **The Hurricane** & **Val Venis** defeated **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** beat **Kevin Fertig** & **Travis Tomko** ... **Batista** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Steven Richards** beat **Rico** ... **Shane McMahon** beat **Kane** in a steel cage match ... **Trish Stratus** & **Lita** defeated **Molly Holly** & **Gail Kim** (**Victoria** was the guest referee) ... **Randy Orton** beat **Maven** ... **Booker T**, **Rob Van Dam**, & **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Christian**, **Chris Jericho**, **Mark Henry**, & **Scott Steiner** in an elimination match.
(11-09-03)

—Stanley McNaughton

WASHINGTON

YAKIMA—WWE at the Sundome: **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** beat **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... **Rosey** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Chris Jericho** beat **Maven** ... **Mark Henry** pinned **The Hurricane** ... **Ivory** defeated **Jazz** ... **Steven Richards** beat **Rico** ... **Val Venis** beat **Test** ... Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** beat **Kane** by disqualification ... **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** & **Booker T** beat **Batista**, **Triple-H**, & **Randy Orton**.
(11-23-03)

—Laurie Elliott

TACOMA—WWE at the Tacoma Dome: **The Hurricane** & **Rosey** defeated **Rob Conway** & **Rene Dupree** ... **Mark Henry** pinned **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Lance Storm** & **Val Venis** beat **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** ... **Maven** pinned **Test** ... **Steven Richards** beat **Rico** ... Women's champion **Molly Holly** defeated **Lita** (**Ivory** was the guest referee) ... Raw tag team champions **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** beat **Chris Jericho** & **Christian** ... Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Kane** by disqualification ... **Booker T** & **Bill Goldberg** defeated **Batista**, **Triple-H**, & **Randy Orton** in a handicap match.
(11-22-03)

—Laurie Elliott

WISCONSIN

AUGUSTA—National Federation of Wrestling/Bull Power Wrestling at the Community Center: **Vegas** beat **Tiny Tubbs** to win the NFW U.S. title. The decision was later reversed ... **The Huckster** beat **Shinobi** ... **Ace Spade** beat **Sledge** ... **Nathan Sensation** beat **Major Chaos** ... **Darkchild** beat **Assault** & **Battery** in a handicap match ... **Tiny Tubbs** beat **Darkchild** ... **Tejas** beat **Halo** ... **Renny D** & **Eclipse** beat tag champs **Steve Stardom** & **Boogieman** to win the title ... **Malice** wrestled **Red Lightning** to a draw ... **Mad Wolverine** beat **Logan Lasher** in a no-disqualification match ... **Minos** won a Royal Rumble-style match.
(11-15-03)

—Nicholas Loken

INTERNATIONAL

CANADA

ANAHIM LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA— Maniac Wrestling Alliance at the Community Hall: **Todd Roberg** pinned **Dropkick Murphy** ... Heavyweight champion **The Mauler** defeated **Aaron Idol** ... **Todd Roberg** & **Avalon** beat **Dropkick Murphy** & **Miss Chevius** ... NWA Pacific Northwest Heavyweight champion **Vance Nevada** pinned **Tim Justice** ... **The Mauler**, **Tim Justice**, **Dropkick Murphy**, & **Miss Chevius** beat **Todd Roberg**, **Vance Nevada**, **Aaron Idol**, & **Avalon**.
(11-24-03)

—Nathan Maylor

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA— Action Wrestling Entertainment at Coyotes Night Club: **Ryan Wood** defeated **Kenny Omega** ... **Notorious T.I.D.** beat **Jon Cutler** ... **Shawn Houston** and **Chris Raine** battled to a no-contest ... **Robby Royce** pinned **The Axe** ... **Dan Severn** defeated **Donnie DiCaprio** by tapout in the third round of a mixed martial arts exhibition ... **Massive Damage** & **Sexy Samantha** beat **Darren Dalton** & **Too Hot McHamma** ... **Buff Bagwell** & **Shane Madison** defeated **Adam Knight** & **Chi Chi Cruz**.
(11-19-03)

—Michael Davidson

WESTLOCK, ALBERTA—Real Canadian Wrestling at R.F. Staples High School: **Steven Styles** beat **White Lightning** ... Women's champion **Angel Starr** beat **Tianna Wilson** ... **Pat Myers** beat **Nik Fusion** and **Joey Syxx** to win the lightweight title ... **Bi-Polar** beat **Steven Hawkes** to win the hardcore title ... **Dante Priest** wrestled **Bobby Jay** to a no-contest ... **Dante Priest** won an eight-man bunkhouse elimination match.
(11-15-03)

—Steven Alkenbrack

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND—CEW/NCW at the CLB Armory: **Chris Payne** pinned Inter-cities champ **Magnus** to win the title ... **Steve Reid** beat CEW owner **Quentin Barboni** & CEW President **Nelson Bragg** in a handicap match ... CEW tag team champions **The Bodyguards** defeated **Harry Belch** & **Jackhammer** in a Texas tornado match ... **Tommy Manson** pinned **Tony King** ... NCW 24/7 tag team champs **Rick** & **Ace Bennett** wrestled to a no-contest with **Norman Tharx** & **Chris Payne** ... CEW unified champion **Travis** beat **The Intruder** by reverse decision ... NCW Xtreme champion **Bruiser Bennett** pinned **Seaman White**.
(11-14-03)

—Daniel Howse

TORONTO, ONTARIO—WWE at the Air Canada Centre: **Bill Goldberg** & **Booker T** defeated **Randy Orton** & **Batista** ... **Kevin Fertig** defeated **Tommy Dreamer** ... **Lance Storm** & **Val Venis** beat **Garrison Cade** & **Mark Jindrak** ... **Maven** defeated **Travis Tomko** ... **Rene Dupree** pinned **The Hurricane** ... **Trish Stratus** & **Lita** beat **Molly Holly** & **Gail Kim** (**Victoria** was the guest referee) ... **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** & **Rob Van Dam** beat **Chris Jericho**, **Christian**, & **Mark Henry** in a table match ... **Shane McMahon** defeated **Kane** in a steel cage match.
(11-07-03)

—Dan Murphy

OTTAWA, ONTARIO—WWE at the Corel Centre: **Torrie Wilson** defeated **Dawn Marie** and **Sable** in a tiny teddy contest ... **Orlando Jordan** defeated **Horshu** ... **Johnny Stamboli** & **Nunzio** beat **Paul London** & **Spanky** ... **Rhyno** pinned **Jamie Noble** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** pinned **Billy Kidman** ... **Bradshaw** pinned **Chuck Palumbo** ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** beat **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** and **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** in a three-way match ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** pinned **John Cena** ... **Kurt Angle**, **Chris Benoit**, & **The Undertaker** defeated **A-Train**, **The Big Show**, & **Brock Lesnar**.
(11-03-03)

—Russ Dailey

MONTREAL, QUEBEC—WWE at the Bell Centre: **Torrie Wilson** beat **Dawn Marie** and **Sable** in a tiny teddy contest ... **Billy Kidman**, **Paul London**, & **Spanky** beat **Chuck Palumbo**, **Nunzio**, & **Johnny Stamboli** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** beat **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** beat **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... **John Cena** pinned **A-Train** ... U.S. champion **The Big Show** pinned **Bradshaw** ... **Kurt Angle** & **Chris Benoit** defeated **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** defeated **The Undertaker** in a streetfight.
(11-02-03)

—Paul Brinkman

KITCHENER, ONTARIO—WWE at the Memorial Auditorium: **Torrie Wilson** beat **Dawn Marie** and **Sable** in a tiny teddy contest ... **Bradshaw** pinned **Horshu** ... **Paul London** & **Spanky** beat **Chuck Palumbo** & **Johnny Stamboli** ... **Orlando Jordan** beat **Rhyno** ... **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** defeated **Billy Kidman** & **Jamie Noble** ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** defeated **Rikishi** & **Scotty Too Hotty** ... Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** pinned **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... **John Cena** defeated **A-Train** ... **Kurt Angle** & **Chris Benoit** defeated **The Big Show** & **Brock Lesnar**.
(11-01-03)

—Frank Krewda

DARTMOUTH, NOVA SCOTIA—Mainstream Wrestling's "Anniversary Assault" at Dave Doolittle's Bar & Grill: **Lincoln Steen** beat **Derrick Trahma** ... **Tony Armstrong** defeated **Pistol Pete** in a submission match ... Atlantic champion **Paco Loco** beat **Kyle Kruze** ... **Vinny Glyde** defeated **Cinder** in a casket match ... **Lincoln Steen** won a 10-man "pumpkin patch" match to earn a shot at the heavyweight title ... Heavyweight champ **Jeremiah Delinquent** defeated **Lincoln Steen**.
(10-30-03)

—Malcolm Brown

ENGLAND

CWMBRAN—UCW at the Cwmbran Sports Stadium: **Mark Priest** defeated **Andy Hogg** ... **Hubert T. Emil** wrestled **The Mailman** to a double-disqualification ... **Davey Jones** & **Lightning Lewis** defeated **Maximum Impact** and **Rampage** & **Justine** in a three-way dance ... **The All-Star** beat **Hell's Guardian** ... Tag team champions **The Kult** beat **Van Wicked** & **The Gangster** ... **Rampage** won a battle royal ... **The Saint** defeated U.S. champion **Tommy Hawk** to win the title ... **The Gangster** defeated heavyweight **Switchblade** to win the title.
(11-08-03)

—Taylor Cates

American Dragon returned to ROH after an extended stay in England. Unfortunately for A.J. Styles, Dragon learned a few new tricks to make even the simplest of moves more painful.

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

2003 PAY-PER-VIEW CARDS

[Editor's note: Due to space limitations, we have not included results of the weekly NWA-TNA pay-per-views. You can find the results of the latest NWA-TNA pay-per-views in the regular "Arena Reports" section in each issue of *PWI*.]

WWE ROYAL RUMBLE

(January 19, Boston, MA, FleetCenter)

Brock Lesnar pinned **The Big Show** to earn the right to compete in the Royal Rumble ... **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** defeated Raw tag team champions **William Regal** & **Lance Storm** to win the title ... **Torrie Wilson** pinned **Dawn Marie** ... **Scott Steiner** beat Raw champion **Triple-H** by disqualification when Triple-H used a sledgehammer ... Smackdown champion **Kurt Angle** defeated **Chris Benoit** by submission ... **Brock Lesnar** won the 30-man Royal Rumble, last eliminating **The Undertaker**.

WWE NO WAY OUT

(February 23, Montreal, Quebec, Bell Centre)

Chris Jericho pinned **Jeff Hardy** ... Raw tag team champions **William Regal** & **Lance Storm** defeated **Rob Van Dam** & **Kane** ... **Matt Hardy** pinned cruiserweight champion **Billy Kidman** to win the title ... **The Undertaker** defeated **The Big Show** by submission ... **Chris Benoit** & **Brock Lesnar** defeated **Kurt Angle**, **Shelton Benjamin**, & **Charlie Haas** in a handicap match (**Edge** was unable to wrestle due to a neck injury) ... Raw champion **Triple-H** pinned **Scott Steiner** ... **Steve Austin** pinned **Eric Bischoff** ... **The Rock** pinned **Hulk Hogan**.

WWE WRESTLEMANIA XIX

(March 30, Seattle, WA, Safeco Field)

Cruiserweight champion **Matt Hardy** pinned **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... **The Undertaker** defeated **A-Train** & **The Big Show** in a handicap match when he pinned A-Train ... **Trish Stratus** defeated women's champion **Victoria** and **Jazz** in a three-way match to win the title when she pinned Victoria ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** defeated **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** and **Chris Benoit** & **Rhyno** in a three-way match when Benjamin pinned Chavo Guerrero Jr. ... **Shawn Michaels** pinned **Chris Jericho** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** pinned **Booker T** ... **Hulk Hogan** pinned **Vince McMahon** in a streetfight ... **The Rock** pinned **Steve Austin** ... **Brock Lesnar** pinned Smackdown champion **Kurt Angle** to win the title.

WWE BACKLASH

(April 27, Worcester, MA, Centrum Centre)

Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Sean O'Haire** pinned **Rikishi** ... Raw tag team champions **Kane** & **Rob Van Dam** beat **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** (**Chief Morley** was the guest referee) ... **Jazz** pinned women's champion **Trish Stratus** to win the title ... **The Big Show** pinned **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** pinned **John Cena** ... **Triple-H**, **Ric Flair**, & **Chris Jericho** beat **Booker T**, **Shawn Michaels**, & **Kevin Nash** when Triple-H pinned Nash ... **Bill Goldberg** pinned **The Rock**.

WWE JUDGMENT DAY

(May 18, Charlotte, NC, Charlotte Coliseum)

John Cena, **Chuck Palumbo**, & **Johnny Stamboli** beat **Chris Benoit**, **Spanky**, & **Rhyno** ... **Rene Dupree** & **Sylvan Grenier** defeated **Scott Steiner** & **Test** ... **Eddie Guerrero** & **Tajiri** (substituting for **Chavo Guerrero Jr.**) defeated Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** in a ladder match to win the title ... **Christian** won a battle royal to capture the vacant Intercontinental title, last eliminating **Booker T** ... **Torrie Wilson** beat **Sable** in a bikini contest ... **Mr. America** pinned **Roddy Piper** ... **Kevin Nash** defeated Raw champion **Triple-H** by disqualification ... Women's champion **Jazz** won a four-way elimination match against **Jacquelyn**, **Trish Stratus**, and **Victoria** when she pinned Jacquelyn ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** defeated **The Big Show** in a stretcher match.

WORLD WRESTLING ALL-STARS: THE RECKONING

(May 25, Auckland, New Zealand, North Shore Event Centre)

Rick Steiner pinned **Mark Mercedes** ... **Teo** beat **Puppet** and **Meatball** in a three-way hardcore midget match ... **Devon Storm** pinned **Konnan** in a hardcore match ... **Sabu** pinned **Joe E. Legend** ... NWA-TNA X champion **Chris Sabin** beat WWA cruiserweight champion **Jerry Lynn**, **Frankie Kazarian**, and **Johnny Swinger** to unify the two titles ... NWA heavyweight champion **Jeff Jarrett** defeated WWA heavyweight champion **Sting** to unify the two titles.

WWE INSURREXTION

(June 7, Newcastle, England, Newcastle Telewest Arena)

Women's champion **Jazz** defeated **Trish Stratus** ... Intercontinental champion **Christian** defeated **Booker T** ... Raw tag team champions **Kane** & **Rob Van Dam** defeated **Rene Dupree** & **Sylvan Grenier** ... **Goldust** pinned **Rico** ... **Buh Buh Ray**, **D-Von**, & **Spike Dudley** defeated **Rodney Mack**, **Christopher Nowinski**, & **Theodore Long** ... **Scott Steiner** pinned **Test** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** pinned **Kevin Nash** in a streetfight.

WWE BAD BLOOD

(June 15, Houston, TX, Compaq Center)

Rodney Mack & **Christopher Nowinski** beat **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** ... **Scott Steiner** pinned **Test** to win the managerial services of **Stacy Keibler** ... **Booker T** beat Intercontinental champion **Christian** by disqualification ... **Rene Dupree** & **Sylvan Grenier** beat Raw tag team champions **Kane** & **Rob Van Dam** to win the title ... **Bill Goldberg** pinned **Chris Jericho** ... **Ric Flair** pinned **Shawn Michaels** after **Randy Orton** interfered ... Raw champion **Triple-H** pinned **Kevin Nash** in a "Hell In A Cell" match (**Mick Foley** was the guest referee).

WWE VENGEANCE

(July 27, Denver, CO, Pepsi Center)

Eddie Guerrero pinned **Chris Benoit** in the finals of the tournament for the vacant U.S. title after **Rhyno** interfered ... **Jamie Noble** pinned **Billy Gunn** ... **Bradshaw** won the "APA Invitational Barroom Brawl" ... Smackdown tag team champions **Shelton Benjamin** & **Charlie Haas** beat **Billy Kidman** & **Rey Misterio Jr.** ... **Sable** pinned **Stephanie McMahon** after **A-Train** interfered ... **The Undertaker** pinned **John Cena** ... **Vince McMahon** pinned **Zach Gowen** ... **Kurt Angle** defeated Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** and **The Big Show** in a three-way match to win the title when he pinned Lesnar.

WWE SUMMERSLAM

(August 24, Phoenix, AZ, America West Arena)

Raw tag team champions **Rene Dupree** & **Sylvan Grenier** beat **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** ... **The Undertaker** pinned **A-Train** ... **Shane McMahon** pinned **Eric Bischoff** ... U.S. champion **Eddie Guerrero** defeated **Chris Benoit**, **Rhyno**, and **Tajiri** in a four-way match when he pinned Rhyno ... Smackdown champion **Kurt Angle** pinned **Brock Lesnar** ... **Kane** pinned **Rob Van Dam** ... Raw champion **Triple-H** defeated **Bill Goldberg**, **Randy Orton**, **Kevin Nash**, **Shawn Michaels**, and **Chris Jericho** in a six-way "Elimination Chamber" match, last eliminating Goldberg via pinfall.

WWE UNFORGIVEN

(September 21, Hershey, PA, Giant Center)

Buh Buh Ray & **D-Von Dudley** defeated **Rene Dupree**, **Sylvan Grenier**, & **Rob Conway** in a handicap table match. Due to a prematch stipulation, the Dudleys won Dupree & Grenier's Raw tag team title ... **Test** pinned **Scott Steiner** after **Stacy Keibler** accidentally hit him with a chair ... **Randy Orton** pinned **Shawn Michaels** ... **Trish Stratus** & **Lita** defeated **Molly Holly** & **Gail Kim** ... **Kane** defeated **Shane McMahon** in a last-man-standing match ... Intercontinental champion **Christian** defeated **Chris Jericho** and **Rob Van Dam** in a three-way match when he pinned Van Dam ... **Jonathan Coachman** & **Al Snow** beat **Jim Ross** & **Jerry Lawler** to (temporarily) become the new broadcast team for *Raw* ... **Bill Goldberg** pinned Raw champion **Triple-H** to win the title.

WWE NO MERCY

(October 19, Baltimore, MD, 1st Mariner Arena)

Cruiserweight champion **Tajiri** pinned **Rey Misterio Jr.** after **Akio** & **Sakoda** interfered ... **Chris Benoit** defeated **A-Train** by submission ... **Zach Gowen** pinned **Matt Hardy** ... **The Basham Brothers** defeated **Bradshaw** & **Ron Simmons** ... **Vince McMahon** defeated **Stephanie McMahon** in a no-disqualification "I Quit" match when **Linda McMahon** threw in the towel for Stephanie while Vince was choking her out with a metal pipe ... **Kurt Angle** defeated **John Cena** by submission ... **The Big Show** pinned U.S. champion **Eddie Guerrero** to win the title ... Smackdown champion **Brock Lesnar** pinned **The Undertaker** in a biker chain match after **Vince McMahon** interfered.

WWE SURVIVOR SERIES

(November 16, Dallas, TX, American Airlines Center)

Kurt Angle, **Bradshaw**, **Chris Benoit**, **John Cena**, & **Hardcore Holly** defeated **A-Train**, **Nathan Jones**, **Brock Lesnar**, **Matt Morgan**, & **The Big Show** in an elimination match (Benoit & Cena were the survivors) ... Women's champion **Molly Holly** pinned **Lita** ... **Kane** defeated **Shane McMahon** in an ambulance match ... Smackdown tag team champions **The Basham Brothers** defeated **Eddie** & **Chavo Guerrero Jr.** ... **Christian**, **Chris Jericho**, **Mark Henry**, **Randy Orton**, & **Scott Steiner** defeated **Booker T**, **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley**, **Shawn Michaels**, & **Rob Van Dam** in an elimination match (Orton was the only survivor). Due to a prematch stipulation, **Steve Austin** was forced to step down as co-general manager of Raw ... **Vince McMahon** defeated **The Undertaker** in a buried alive match after **Kane** interfered ... Raw champion **Bill Goldberg** pinned **Triple-H**.

WWE ARMAGEDDON

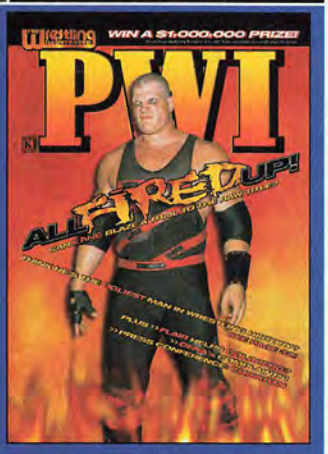
(December 14, Orlando, FL, T.D. Waterhouse Center)

Booker T pinned **Mark Henry** ... **Randy Orton** pinned Intercontinental champion **Rob Van Dam** to win the title (**Mick Foley** was the guest referee) ... **Chris Jericho** & **Christian** defeated **Trish Stratus** & **Lita** ... **Shawn Michaels** pinned **Batista** ... **Matt Hardy** defeated **Maven** ... **Ric Flair** & **Batista** won a seven-team tag team turmoil match, last defeating Raw tag team champions **Buh Buh Ray** & **D-Von Dudley** to win the title ... Women's champion **Molly Holly** pinned **Ivory** ... **Triple-H** defeated Raw champion **Bill Goldberg** and **Kane** in a three-way match, pinning Goldberg to win the title.

between falls

PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED welcomes readers' comments on any of our stories or columns. Send letters to: BETWEEN FALLS Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034
Or you can e-mail your comments to prowrestlingillustrated@yahoo.com
Letters preceded by a ☎ indicate letters left by fans on the *PWI* Hotline (1-900-226-4PWI; see ad elsewhere in this issue).

TOO HOT TO HANDLE



Our January 2004 cover story on Kane ignited serious debate among readers, particularly Dr. Sidney M. Basil's evaluation of the nature of Kane's rage and his subconscious fear of winning—and losing—the Raw title.

"I find it interesting that as soon as Dr. Basil essentially called Kane out for failing to compete for the Raw championship, Kane picked a fight with Goldberg and Triple-H," wrote Ben Smythe of Detroit. "It looks like *PWI* went and lit a fire under Kane's oversized butt!"

"Kudos to Liz Hunter for an insightful and entertaining look at Kane, the man and his motivations," e-mailed Jennifer Spillman of Cooperstown, New York. "From the way she puts it, it looks like Kane needs to win the Raw title to extinguish his rage and finally silence all of his critics."

Of course, we didn't please everyone.

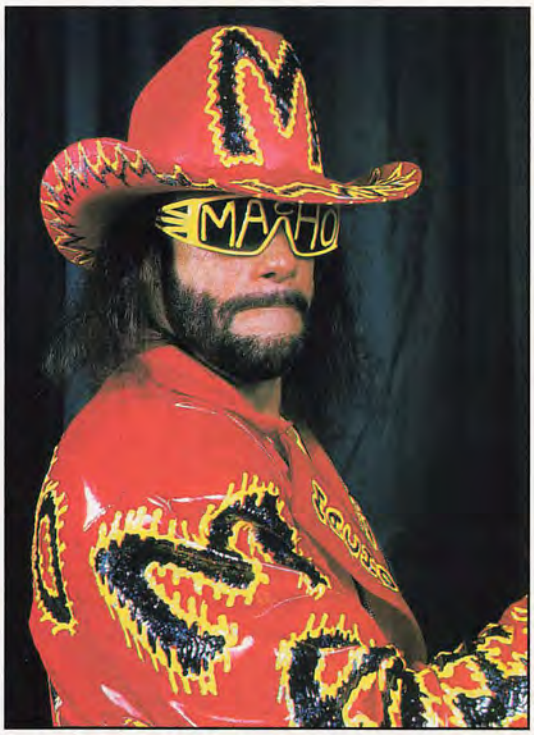
"It's bad enough that we have Kane shoved down our throats every week on *Raw* (as well as his 'eulogy' for his brother on *Smackdown*), but now you've gone and put 'The Big Red Reject' on the cover," wrote Jessie Draves of Mississaugua, Ontario. "How seriously can you take a monster who can't even beat Shane McMahon convincingly?"

UNPREDICTABLE MICK

I couldn't be happier to see Mick Foley back in WWE. Until his return on *Raw*, I had forgotten just how much I enjoyed Mick's offbeat sense of humor. Now that he's co-GM of Raw, you get the sense that anything can happen. Considering how predictable *Raw* has been lately, Mrs. Foley's little boy is like a breath of fresh air. He injected new life into a stale show.

I'd love to see Foley pit Rob Van Dam against Goldberg or put Lance Storm against Chris Jericho in a ladder match. For someone as creative as Mick, the possibilities are endless. Let's make *Raw* wrestling's true can't-miss show again!

CHRIS KUBIEC
Charlotte, NC



Randy Savage the wrestler still has a lot of fans to this day, but there aren't as many fans of Savage the rapper out there. Brandon Hyland is a proud exception.

BE A MAN FAN SPEAKS

My name is Brandon, and I'm a Randy Savage fan. And I don't mean Randy the wrestler. I'm talking about Randy the rapper. Seriously.

Everyone and his brother has ripped on Savage's album, *Be A Man*, and I admit I had reservations as well. But I thought the least I could do was give him the benefit of the doubt. So I plopped down my 14 bucks and took *Be A Man* home.

Believe it or not, that CD hasn't left my stereo since. As far as I'm concerned, everything on Savage's CD is at least as good as anything I've heard from Outkast or Ludacriss. And if Ja Rule and 50 Cent—or Eminem and Everlast—can turn their personal feuds into fodder for hit singles, what's wrong with Savage calling out Hulk Hogan on the title track?

You can scoff at Savage's musical abilities all you want, but the fact of the matter is not only can he wrestle, he can sing as well. The "Macho Man" is wrestling's greatest showman. I can't wait to see him in concert.

BRANDON HYLAND
Rochester, NY

THE *REAL* TRUTH

I just wanted to comment on something I saw recently, and I want the fans of "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin to think about this. Austin recently had a special show on UPN dedicated to his trials and tribulations *(The Stone-Cold Truth)*. *Bah!* It was just another outlet for him to whine. He whined in interviews, he whined in his book, and now he whines in his own special. I am sick of hearing it.

What a joke. Get over it, "Stone-Cold." Yeah, Owen Hart broke your neck, but you've been whining about it ever since. I am tired of seeing Austin cry about how he has to give up wrestling. At least you're still alive. At least you're still on this

pleasant earth and making nice money.

So quit your whining and be happy for what you have.

MARTHA SCHWARTZ
t_r_dandy@yahoo.com

YAY FOR UGLY WRESTLERS!

I just got finished paging through your special section on the ugliest wrestlers of all-time ("You Think Kane Is The Ugliest Man In Wrestling History? Check Out These Beauties!" January 2004). All I can say is wow! That was the most grotesque assortment of freaks I've seen in my life. I can only imagine how much fun your editors had as they dug through the photo archives in search of shots of wrestlers who fell out of the ugly tree, particularly when they found that shot of Mickey McGinty. (For the life of me, I can't tell if that's a man or a woman.)

What I thought was truly hysterical was the series of wrestling Angels who just kept getting progressively uglier. You had the ogre-like Angel, the mutton-chopped Irish Angel, the gold-toothed Swedish Angel, and the Uncle Fester-like Super Swedish Angel.

Looking through the section, I realized that all the wrestlers today are dime-a-dozen body beautifuls. I'd love to see someone like Ivan Podubny back in the ring, just for a change of pace.

SCOTT HEIM
Niagara Falls, NY

IN DEFENSE OF TRISH

I am writing in defense of Trish Stratus after reading the diatribe written by "Between Falls" contributor Holden Mnutz ("No Straight Shot") in the January '04 issue. I have enjoyed your magazines for the past two years, but I can't recall ever being so outraged by an item, and I always read Brandi Mankiewicz' column. But back to the subject at hand: Holden's unfair comments about Trish Stratus being one of the worst female wrestlers today. Trish did something that few women in wrestling could do: She made people care about the women's division.

While trainer Fit Finlay and the other divas deserve a lot of credit, Trish has been the most visible representative of the WWE women's division and has done a damn good job. The fans are accustomed to the exciting moves in her arsenal, but she always adds new ones to her repertoire. She has been the go-to face in the division and appeals to both men and women alike.

While Ivory was a very good champion, her toughest battles were against Mae Young and a woman with a "broken neck," Chyna. Trish has gamely fought Jazz, Molly Holly, Victoria, and Gail Kim.

Finally, Holden proved himself a hypocrite when he wrote, "People can't see past the two pieces of plastic on [Trish's] chest." If Holden could see past them, why did he feel the need to write about them?

JAKEY EMMERT
Minneapolis, MN

Trish Stratus should be appreciated for all she has done for the WWE women's division, according to Jakey Emmert, who took exception to comments made by another reader in a previous issue.

RAVEN'S JUST A TURKEY

I have a question for all these NWA-TNA fans: What's the big deal about Raven?

The fans in Nashville seem to love this guy, and I just can't figure it out. As far as I can tell, he's a one-dimensional brawler who wears a dress. What's so special about that? The Headbangers were doing that five years ago.

All Raven does is whine about what a tough life he's led and what a hard guy he is. *Hmmmmmm*, you didn't amount to anything in WWE. You couldn't beat Jeff Jarrett or A.J. Styles for the NWA title. You lasted exactly one day as WCW U.S. champion. Other than a run as ECW champion, Raven hasn't accomplished much of anything.

I hope Don Callis succeeds in showing everyone what I've been saying all along: Raven is all talk and no action. Go on, Raven, prove me wrong.

ANDREW VECCHIO
Las Vegas, NV □

PWI Hotline Extra!

Your answers to our question of the week!

Question of the Week: If you haven't ordered an NWA-TNA pay-per-view yet, what will it take for you to do so? (December 2 to 8, 2003)

Hotline callers respond: "NWA-TNA still reminds me too much of WCW," said Molly Carney of Springfield, Indiana. "They need to stop bringing in retreads for a couple of shows and then never following up."

"They need to pull back on Jeff Jarrett," said Tim Conley of Jacksonville, Florida. "It's no secret that he and his father are major players behind the scenes. As long as that's the case, he shouldn't be a part of the main event. There's too much of a conflict of interest."

"I may buy the Bound For Glory supercard if the Hogan-Jarrett match happens," responded Rick Myers of Brooklyn, New York. "If every telecast is a PPV, how can you tell when something special is going to happen or if it's just a show with a lot of filler? I want to be sure it'll be worth my investment."

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS: PAST WINNERS

This is a complete listing of all *PWI* Achievement Award winners. We've also provided a comprehensive listing of runners-up (which were first reported in 1976) for all awards.

Award winners were first presented annually in the pages of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED effective with our March 1982 issue. Prior to that, awards appeared in *Sports Review Wrestling* (1980 awards in the March 1981 edition), *Sports Review Wrestling Annual* (1977-'79 awards in Spring 1978, '79, and '80 editions), and *Victory Sports Series Wrestling Annual* and *Yearbook* editions (1972-'76 awards in issues #4, 7, 11, 14, and 18).

WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

2002: Brock Lesnar
Runners-up: 1—Rob Van Dam, 2—Triple-H, 3—The Undertaker

2001: Steve Austin
Runners-up: 1—Kurt Angle, 2—The Rock, 3—Rob Van Dam

2000: The Rock
Runners-up: 1—Triple-H, 2—Booker T, 3—Kurt Angle

1999: Steve Austin
Runners-up: 1—The Rock, 2—Sting, 3—Tazz

1998: Steve Austin
Runners-up: 1—Bill Goldberg, 2—Dallas Page, 3—Rocky Maivia

1997: Lex Luger
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin, 2—The Undertaker, 3—Dallas Page

1996: The Giant
Runners-up: 1—Shawn Michaels, 2—Ric Flair, 3—Ahmed Johnson

1995: Diesel
Runners-up: 1—Shawn Michaels, 2—Sting, 3—Hulk Hogan

1994: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Bret Hart, 2—Razor Ramon, 3—Ric Flair

1993: Big Van Vader
Runners-up: 1—Bret Hart, 2—Shawn Michaels, 3—Yokozuna

1992: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Ron Simmons, 2—Rick Rude, 3—Bret Hart

1991: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Lex Luger, 2—Bret Hart, 3—Sting

1990: Sting
Runners-up: 1—Ultimate Warrior, 2—Hulk Hogan, 3—Lex Luger

1989: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Lex Luger, 3—Rick Steamboat

1988: Randy Savage
Runners-up: 1—Jerry Lawler, 2—Lex Luger, 3—Ric Flair

1987: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Randy Savage, 3—Steve Williams

1986: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Randy Savage, 3—Nikita Koloff

1985: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Rick Martel, 3—Sgt. Slaughter

1984: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Kerry Von Erich, 3—Rick Martel

1983: Harley Race
Runners-up: 1—Nick Bockwinkel, 2—Andre the Giant, 3—Bob Backlund

1982: Bob Backlund
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Hulk Hogan, 3—Jimmy Snuka

1981: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund, 2—Tommy Rich, 3—Dusty Rhodes

1980: Bob Backlund
Runners-up: 1—Harley Race, 2—Verne Gagne, 3—The Iron Sheik

1979: Harley Race
Runners-up: 1—Dusty Rhodes, 2—Jimmy Snuka, 3—Bob Backlund

1978: Dusty Rhodes
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund, 2—Rick Steamboat, 3—Harley Race

1977: Dusty Rhodes
Runners-up: 1—Superstar Graham, 2—Bob Backlund, 3—Harley Race

1976: Terry Funk
Runners-up: 1—Bruno Sammartino, 2—Nick Bockwinkel, 3—Paul Jones

1975: Mr. Wrestling II

1974: Bruno Sammartino

1973: Jack Brisco

1972: Pedro Morales

TAG TEAM OF THE YEAR

2002: Billy Gunn & Chuck Palumbo
Runners-up: 1—Booker T & Goldust, 2—Jamal & Rosey, 3—Kurt Angle & Chris Benoit

2001: Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley
Runners-up: 1—Kane & The Undertaker, 2—The Hardy Boyz, 3—The Acolytes

2000: The Hardy Boyz
Runners-up: 1—Christian & Edge, 2—Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley, 3—Kronik

1999: Kane & X-Pac
Runners-up: 1—The Hardy Boyz, 2—Harlem Heat, 3—Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley

1998: Billy Gunn & Jesse James
Runners-up: 1—Sabu & Rob Van Dam, 2—Kane & Mankind, 3—Kane & The Undertaker

1997: Scott Hall & Kevin Nash
Runners-up: 1—Rick & Scott Steiner, 2—The Road Warriors, 3—Lex Luger & The Giant

1996: Harlem Heat
Runners-up: 1—The Eliminators, 2—Rick & Scott Steiner, 3—The Gangstas

1995: Harlem Heat
Runners-up: 1—The Smokin' Gunns, 2—Owen Hart & Yokozuna, 3—Rick & Scott Steiner

1994: The Nasty Boys
Runners-up: 1—The Headshrinkers, 2—Public Enemy, 3—The Rock 'n' Roll Express

1993: Rick & Scott Steiner
Runners-up: 1—The Hollywood Blonds, 2—Money Inc., 3—The Heavenly Bodies

1992: Terry Gordy & Steve Williams
Runners-up: 1—The Natural Disasters, 2—Rick & Scott Steiner, 3—Barry Windham & Dustin Rhodes

1991: Larry Zbyszko & Arn Anderson
Runners-up: 1—Legion of Doom, 2—Rick & Scott Steiner, 3—Robert Fuller & Jeff Jarrett

1990: Rick & Scott Steiner
Runners-up: 1—Demolition, 2—Doom, 3—Legion of Doom

1989: Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson
Runners-up: 1—Demolition, 2—The Road Warriors, 3—Jim Garvin & Michael Hayes

1988: The Road Warriors
Runners-up: 1—The Midnight Express, 2—Demolition, 3—Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson

1987: The Midnight Express
Runners-up: 1—The Hart Foundation, 2—The Road Warriors, 3—The Rock 'n' Roll Express

1986: The Rock 'n' Roll Express
Runners-up: 1—The Road Warriors, 2—The British Bulldogs, 3—The Midnight Rockers

1985: The Road Warriors
Runners-up: 1—Ted DiBiase & Steve Williams, 2—Ivan & Nikita Koloff, 3—The British Bulldogs

1984: The Road Warriors
Runners-up: 1—Kerry, Kevin, & Mike Von Erich, 2—The Fabulous Ones, 3—The Rock 'n' Roll Express

1983: The Road Warriors

Runners-up: 1—Kerry, Kevin, & David Von Erich, 2—Michael Hayes, Terry Gordy, & Buddy Roberts, 3—Jack & Jerry Brisco

1982: Greg Gagne & Jim Brunzell
Runners-up: 1—Mr. Fuji & Mr. Saito, 2—The Freebirds, 3—Ole Anderson & Stan Hansen

1981: The Fabulous Freebirds
Runners-up: 1—Rick Martel & Tony Garea, 2—Mr. Fuji & Mr. Saito, 3—Greg Gagne & Jim Brunzell

1980: Jimmy Snuka & Ray Stevens
Runners-up: 1—Mr. Wrestling & Mr. Wrestling II, 2—The Samoans, 3—Verne Gagne & Mad Dog Vachon

1979: Ivan Putski & Tito Santana
Runners-up: 1—Jerry & Johnny Valiant, 2—Paul Jones & Baron Von Raschke, 3—The Spoiler & Mark Lewin

1978: Rick Steamboat & Paul Jones
Runners-up: 1–The Yukon Lumberjacks, 2—Mike Graham & Steve Keirn, 3—Greg Gagne & Jim Brunzell

1977: Gene & Ole Anderson
Runners-up: 1—Mr. Fuji & Prof. Tanaka, 2—Greg Gagne & Jim Brunzell, 3—Ric Flair & Greg Valentine

1976: The Executioners
Runners-up: 1—Gene & Ole Anderson, 2—Billy White Wolf & Chief Jay Strongbow, 3—Jimmy & Johnny Valiant

1975: Gene & Ole Anderson

1974: Jimmy & Johnny Valiant

1973: Nick Bockwinkel & Ray Stevens

1972: Bruiser & Crusher

MATCH OF THE YEAR

2002: Hulk Hogan vs. The Rock
Runners-up: 1—Triple-H vs. Shawn Michaels, 2—Eddie Guerrero vs. Rob Van Dam, 3—Kurt Angle & Chris Benoit vs. Edge & Rey Misterio Jr.

2001: Christian & Edge vs. The Hardy Boyz vs. The Dudley Boyz
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin vs. Triple-H, 2—The Rock vs. Chris Jericho, 3—Jeff Hardy vs. Rob Van Dam

2000: Christian & Edge vs. The Hardy Boyz vs. The Dudley Boyz
Runners-up: 1—Chris Jericho vs. Triple-H, 2—Christian & Edge vs. The Hardy Boyz vs. The Dudley Boyz, 3—Super Crazy vs. Yoshihiro Tajiri

1999: The Rock vs. Mankind
Runners-up: 1—Rob Van Dam vs. Jerry Lynn, 2—Steve Austin vs. Vince McMahon, 3—The Rock vs. Steve Austin

1998: The Undertaker vs. Mankind
Runners-up: 1—Shawn Michaels vs. Steve Austin, 2—Bill Goldberg vs. Hollywood Hogan, 3—Taz vs. Bam Bam Bigelow

1997: Bret Hart vs. Steve Austin
Runners-up: 1—Eddie Guerrero vs. Rey Misterio Jr., 2—Shawn Michaels vs. The Undertaker, 3—Terry Funk vs. The Sandman vs. Stevie Richards

1996: Shawn Michaels vs. Bret Hart
Runners-up: 1—Shawn Michaels vs. Mankind, 2—Sabu vs. Rob Van Dam, 3—War Games

1995: Diesel vs. Shawn Michaels
Runners-up: 1—Jeff Jarrett vs. Shawn Michaels, 2—Harlem Heat vs. The Nasty Boys, 3—Psicosis vs. Rey Misterio Jr.

1994: Shawn Michaels vs. Razor Ramon
Runners-up: 1—The Nasty Boys vs. Cactus Jack & Maxx Payne, 2—Ric Flair vs. Hulk Hogan, 3—Alundra Blayze vs. Bull Nakano

1993: Shawn Michaels vs. Marty Jannetty
Runners-up: 1—Rick & Scott Steiner vs. The Heavenly Bodies, 2—Rick Rude vs. Dustin Rhodes, 3—Cactus Jack vs. Big Van Vader

1992: Davey Boy Smith vs. Bret Hart
Runners-up: 1—Brian Pillman vs. Jushin Liger, 2—Royal Rumble, 3—Rick Steamboat vs. Rick Rude

1991: The Steiners vs. Sting & Lex Luger
Runners-up: 1—Bret Hart vs. Curt Hennig, 2—Lex Luger vs. Ron Simmons, 3—Cactus Jack vs. Eddie Gilbert

1990: Hulk Hogan vs. Ultimate Warrior (Warrior wins WWF World title)
Runners-up: 1—Sting vs. Ric Flair, 2—Hulk Hogan vs. Earthquake, 3—Royal Rumble

1989: Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat (Flair wins his sixth NWA World title)
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage, 2—Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat, 3—Eric Embry vs. P.Y. Chu-Hi

1988: Andre the Giant vs. Hulk Hogan (Andre wins WWF World title)
Runners-up: 1—Sting vs. Ric Flair, 2—Jerry Lawler vs. Curt Hennig, 3—Ultimate Warrior vs. Honky Tonk Man

1987: Rick Steamboat vs. Randy Savage (Steamboat wins WWF I-C title)
Runners-up: 1—War Games: The Match Beyond I, 2—Hulk Hogan vs. Andre the Giant, 3—Ronnie Garvin vs. Ric Flair

1986: Dusty Rhodes vs. Ric Flair (Dusty wins NWA World title at Great American Bash)
Runners-up: 1—The British Bulldogs vs. Greg Valentine & Brutus Beefcake, 2—The Road Warriors vs. Ronnie Garvin & Magnum T.A., 3—Hulk Hogan vs. Paul Orndorff

1985: Hulk Hogan & Mr. T vs. Roddy Piper & Paul Orndorff (WrestleMania I)
Runners-up: 1—The Road Warriors vs. Ivan & Nikita Koloff, 2—Ric Flair vs. Nikita Koloff, 3—Rick Martel vs. Bob Backlund

Kerry Von Erich vs. Ric Flair: 1984

1984: Kerry Von Erich vs. Ric Flair (Von Erich captures NWA World title)
Runners-up: 1—Rick Martel vs. Jumbo Tsuruta, 2—Hulk Hogan vs. The Iron Sheik, 3—Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat

1983: Harley Race vs. Ric Flair (Race wins seventh NWA World title)
Runners-up: 1—Rick Steamboat & Jay Youngblood vs. Sgt. Slaughter & Don Kernodle, 2—Don Muraco vs. Pedro Morales, 3—Tommy Rich vs. Buzz Sawyer

1982: Bob Backlund vs. Jimmy Snuka (cage match)
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund vs. Ric Flair, 2—Nick Bockwinkel vs. Otto Wanz, 3—Nick Bockwinkel vs. Otto Wanz

1981: Andre the Giant vs. Killer Khan
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair vs. Dusty Rhodes, 2—Bob Backlund vs. Don Muraco, 3—Michael Hayes vs. Terry Gordy

1980: Bruno Sammartino vs. Larry Zbyszko (cage match)
Runners-up: 1—Andre the Giant vs. Hulk Hogan, 2—Verne Gagne vs. Nick Bockwinkel, 3—Dusty Rhodes vs. Bob Backlund

1979: Dusty Rhodes vs. Harley Race (Rhodes wins NWA World title)
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund vs. Pat Patterson, 2—Nick Bockwinkel vs. Bob Backlund, 3—Mr. Wrestling II vs. Ernie Ladd

1978: Bob Backlund vs. Superstar Graham (Backlund wins WWF World title)
Runners-up: 1—Blackjack Mulligan vs. Ric Flair, 2—Dusty Rhodes vs. Superstar Graham (bullrope match) 3—Rick Steamboat vs. Ric Flair

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

1977: Superstar Graham vs. Bruno Sammartino (Graham wins WWF World title)
Runners-up: 1—Dusty Rhodes vs. Superstar Graham, 2—Andre the Giant vs. Ric Flair, 3—Greg Gagne vs. Bob Backlund
1976: Bruno Sammartino vs. Stan Hansen
Runners-up: 1—Terry Funk vs. Rocky Johnson, 2—Nick Bockwinkel vs. Baron Von Raschke, 3—Andre the Giant vs. Abdullah the Butcher
1975: Bruno Sammartino vs. Spiros Arion
1974: Dory Funk Jr. vs. Jack Brisco
1973: Harley Race vs. Dory Funk Jr. (Race wins first NWA World title)
1972: Bruno Sammartino wins 22-man Los Angeles battle royal

FEUD OF THE YEAR

2002: Eric Bischoff vs. Stephanie McMahon
Runners-up: 1—Kurt Angle vs. Edge, 2—Triple-H vs. Stephanie McMahon, 3—Molly Holly vs. Trish Stratus
2001: Shane McMahon vs. Vince McMahon
Runners-up: 1—Booker T vs. The Rock, 2—Chris Benoit vs. Kurt Angle, 3—Edge vs. Christian
2000: Triple-H vs. Kurt Angle
Runners-up: 1—Triple-H vs. The Rock, 2—Booker T vs. Jeff Jarrett, 3—Christian & Edge vs. The Hardy Boyz
1999: Steve Austin vs. Vince McMahon
Runners-up: 1—Triple-H vs. The Rock, 2—Jerry Lynn vs. Rob Van Dam, 3—Ric Flair vs. Hulk Hogan
1998: Steve Austin vs. Vince McMahon
Runners-up: 1—NWO Wolfpac vs. NWO Hollywood, 2—Ric Flair vs. Eric Bischoff, 3—Rocky Maivia vs. Ken Shamrock
1997: Randy Savage vs. Dallas Page
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin vs. Bret Hart, 2—Hulk Hogan vs. Roddy Piper, 3—Sabu vs. Taz
1996: Eric Bischoff vs. Vince McMahon
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage, 2—Mankind vs. The Undertaker, 3—Jamie Dundee vs. Wolfie D
1995: Axl Rotten vs. Ian Rotten
Runners-up: 1—Harlem Heat vs. The Nasty Boys, 2—Jeff Jarrett vs. Razor Ramon, 3—Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage
1994: Bret Hart vs. Owen Hart
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan vs. Ric Flair, 2—Randy Savage vs. Crush, 3—Sabu vs. Terry Funk
1993: Bret Hart vs. Jerry Lawler
Runners-up: 1—Rick Rude vs. Dustin Rhodes, 2—Cactus Jack vs. Big Van Vader, 3—Tony Anthony vs. Tracey Smothers

The Moondogs vs. Jerry Lawler & Jeff Jarrett: 1992

1992: The Moondogs vs. Jeff Jarrett & Jerry Lawler
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage, 2—Ultimate Warrior vs. Papa Shango, 3—Rick Rude vs. Rick Steamboat
1991: Ultimate Warrior vs. The Undertaker
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan vs. Sgt. Slaughter, 2—Sting vs. Cactus Jack & Abdullah the Butcher, 3—Lex Luger vs. Ron Simmons
1990: Ric Flair vs. Lex Luger
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan vs. Earthquake, 2—Ultimate Warrior vs. Rick Rude, 3—Chris Adams vs. Steve Austin
1989: Ric Flair vs. Terry Funk
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan vs. Randy Savage, 2—Akbar's Army vs. Eric Embry, 3—Roddy Piper vs. Rick Rude
1988: Ric Flair vs. Lex Luger
Runners-up: 1—Rick Rude vs. Jake Roberts, 2—Kerry Von Erich vs. Jerry Lawler, 3—Hulk Hogan & Randy Savage vs. Ted DiBiase & Andre the Giant
1987: Four Horsemen vs. Superpowers & Road Warriors
Runners-up: 1—Randy Savage vs. Rick Steamboat, 2—Jerry Lawler vs. Tommy Rich & Austin Idol, 3—Brian Adias vs. Kevin Von Erich
1986: Hulk Hogan vs. Paul Orndorff
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair vs. Dusty Rhodes, 2—The Sheepherders vs. The Fantastics, 3—The Midnight Express vs. The Rock 'n' Roll Express

MOST POPULAR WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

2002: Rob Van Dam
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Booker T, 3—The Rock
2001: Rob Van Dam
Runners-up: 1—The Rock, 2—Chris Jericho, 3—Kurt Angle
2000: The Rock
Runners-up: 1—Rob Van Dam, 2—Chris Jericho, 3—Bill Goldberg
1999: The Rock
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin, 2—Bill Goldberg, 3—Mankind
1998: Steve Austin
Runners-up: 1—Bill Goldberg, 2—Rocky Maivia, 3—Dallas Page
1997: Sting
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin, 2—Ric Flair, 3—Dallas Page
1996: Shawn Michaels
Runners-up: 1—Randy Savage, 2—Sid Vicious, 3—The Undertaker
1995: Shawn Michaels
Runners-up: 1—Sting, 2—Diesel, 3—Hulk Hogan
1994: Sting
Runners-up: 1—Bret Hart, 2—The Undertaker, 3—Hulk Hogan
1993: Lex Luger
Runners-up: 1—Sting, 2—Bret Hart, 3—Dustin Rhodes
1992: Sting
Runners-up: 1—The Ultimate Warrior, 2—The Undertaker, 3—Ron Simmons
1991: Sting
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Sid Justice, 3—Rick & Scott Steiner
1990: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Sting, 2—Ultimate Warrior, 3—Lex Luger
1989: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Sting, 3—The Ultimate Warrior
1988: Randy Savage
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Sting, 3—Lex Luger
1987: Dusty Rhodes
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Randy Savage, 3—Nikita Koloff
1986: Roddy Piper
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Rick Morton, 3—Nikita Koloff
1985: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Magnum T.A., 2—Kerry Von Erich, 3—Tito Santana
1984: Kerry Von Erich
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Dusty Rhodes, 3—Sgt. Slaughter
1983: Jimmy Snuka
Runners-up: 1—Dusty Rhodes, 2—David Von Erich, 3—Junkyard Dog
1982: Andre the Giant
Runners-up: 1—Tommy Rich, 2—

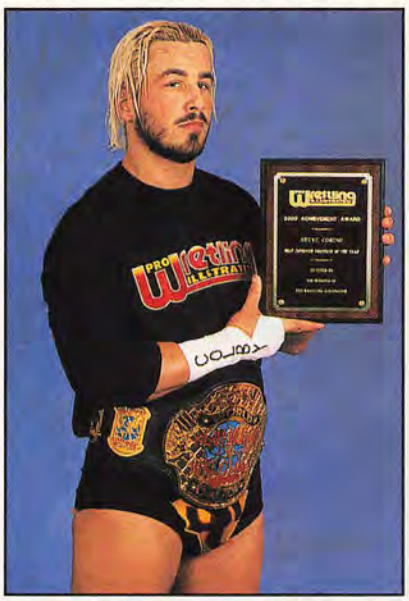
Hulk Hogan, 3—Dusty Rhodes
1981: Tommy Rich
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund, 2—Andre the Giant, 3—Dusty Rhodes
1980: Mr. Wrestling II
Runners-up: 1—Dusty Rhodes, 2—Andre the Giant, 3—Bruno Sammartino
1979: Dusty Rhodes
Runners-up: 1—Andre the Giant, 2—Ivan Putski, 3—Mr. Wrestling II
1978: Dusty Rhodes
Runners-up: 1—Andre the Giant, 2—Rick Steamboat, 3—Bob Backlund
1977: Andre the Giant
Runners-up: 1—Dusty Rhodes, 2—Bob Backlund, 3—Mil Mascaras
1976: Wahoo McDaniel
Runners-up: 1—Chief Jay Strongbow, 2—Mr. Wrestling II, 3—Ivan Putski
1975: Mil Mascaras
1974: Billy Robinson
1973: Chief Jay Strongbow
1972: Jack Brisco/Fred Curry (tie)

MOST HATED WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

2002: Chris Jericho
Runners-up: 1—The Un-Americans, 2—Kurt Angle, 3—Triple-H
2001: Steve Austin
Runners-up: 1—Booker T, 2—Kurt Angle, 3—Shane McMahon
2000: Kurt Angle
Runners-up: 1—Triple-H, 2—Steven Richards, 3—Jeff Jarrett
1999: Dallas Page
Runners-up: 1—Triple-H, 2—The Undertaker, 3—The Dudley Boyz
1998: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Vince McMahon, 2—Eric Bischoff, 3—Bret Hart
1997: Bret Hart
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Owen Hart, 3—Curt Hennig
1996: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Goldust, 2—Jerry Lawler, 3—The Giant
1995: Jerry Lawler
Runners-up: 1—Kevin Sullivan, 2—The Gangstas, 3—Davey Boy Smith
1994: Bob Backlund
Runners-up: 1—Owen Hart, 2—Big Van Vader, 3—Jerry Lawler
1993: Jerry Lawler
Runners-up: 1—Big Van Vader, 2—Yokozuna, 3—Shawn Michaels
1992: Rick Rude
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Jake Roberts, 3—The Moondogs
1991: Sgt. Slaughter
Runners-up: 1—The Undertaker, 2—Lex Luger, 3—Jake Roberts
1990: Earthquake
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Rick Rude, 3—Eddie Gilbert
1989: Randy Savage
Runners-up: 1—Terry Funk, 2—Rick Rude, 3—Lex Luger
1988: Andre the Giant
Runners-up: 1—Barry Windham, 2—Eddie Gilbert, 3—Ted DiBiase
1987: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Andre the Giant, 2—Honky Tonk Man, 3—Lex Luger
1986: Paul Orndorff
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Col. DeBeers, 3—Rick Rude
1985: Roddy Piper
Runners-up: 1—Chris Adams, 2—Ted DiBiase, 3—John Studd
1984: Roddy Piper
Runners-up: 1—Kevin Sullivan, 2—Tully Blanchard, 3—The Iron Sheik
1983: Greg Valentine
Runners-up: 1—Masked Superstar, 2—Kevin Sullivan, 3—Michael Hayes
1982: Ted DiBiase
Runners-up: 1—Blackjack Mulligan, 2—Superstar Graham, 3—Buzz Sawyer
1981: Ken Patera
Runners-up: 1—Don Muraco, 2—Nick Bockwinkel, 3—Roddy Piper
1980: Larry Zbyszko
Runners-up: 1—Greg Valentine, 2—Ernie Ladd, 3—Hulk Hogan
1979: Greg Valentine
Runners-up: 1—Terry Funk, 2—Ken Patera, 3—Ivan Koloff
1978: Ric Flair
Runners-up: 1—Ken Patera, 2—Victor Rivera, 3—Bob Orton Jr.
1977: Ken Patera
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Superstar Graham, 3—Nick Bockwinkel
1976: Stan Hansen
Runners-up: 1—Ox Baker, 2—Terry Funk, 3—The Spoiler
1975: Greg Valentine
1974: The Great Mephisto
1973: Superstar Graham
1972: The Sheik

MOST IMPROVED WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

2002: Brock Lesnar
Runners-up: 1—Trish Stratus, 2—Jamie Noble, 3—A.J. Styles
2001: Edge
Runners-up: 1—Test, 2—The Hurricane, 3—Kurt Angle
2000: Steve Corino
Runners-up: 1—Lance Storm, 2—Scotty Too Hotty, 3—Justin Credible
1999: Jerry Lynn
Runners-up: 1—The Hardy Boyz, 2—Bob Holly, 3—Kanyon
1998: Booker T
Runners-up: 1—D-Lo Brown, 2—The New Age Outlaws, 3—Juventud Guerrera
1997: Ken Shamrock
Runners-up: 1—Steve McMichael, 2—The Headbangers, 3—Alex Wright
1996: Ahmed Johnson
Runners-up: 1—Chris Benoit, 2—Stevie Richards, 3—Taz
1995: Dallas Page
Runners-up: 1—Tommy Dreamer, 2—Harlem Heat, 3—Savio Vega
1994: Diesel
Runners-up: 1—Johnny B. Badd, 2—Sabu, 3—Owen Hart
1993: Yokozuna
Runners-up: 1—The Kid, 2—Brian Lee, 3—Tatanka
1992: Razor Ramon
Runners-up: 1—Ron Simmons, 2—Virgil, 3—Brian Christopher
1991: Dustin Rhodes
Runners-up: 1—Ron Simmons, 2—The Undertaker, 3—Crush
1990: Paul Roma
Runners-up: 1—Doom, 2—Tugboat, 3—Cactus Jack
1989: Scott Steiner
Runners-up: 1—Brutus Beefcake, 2—Jeff Jarrett, 3—P.Y. Chu-Hi
1988: Sting
Runners-up: 1—The Ultimate Warrior, 2—Iceman Parsons, 3—Jeff Jarrett
1987: Curt Hennig
Runners-up: 1—Al Perez, 2—Honky Tonk Man, 3—Sting
1986: Terry Gordy
Runners-up: 1—Scott Hall, 2—Sam Houston, 3—Wendell Cooley
1985: Steve Williams
Runners-up: 1—Brian Adias, 2—Nikita Koloff, 3—Randy Savage
1984: Billy Jack Haynes
Runners-up: 1—Magnum T.A., 2—



Steve Corino: 2000

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

Rick Martel, 3—Ronnie Garvin
1983: Brett Wayne Sawyer
Runners-up: 1—Mike Rotundo, 2—Pez Whatley, 3—Brad Rheingans
1982: Barry Windham
Runners-up: 1—Otto Wanz, 2—Buzz Sawyer, 3—Rick Martel
1981: Kevin Sullivan
Runners-up: 1—Sgt. Slaughter, 2—Charlie Cook, 3—Tito Santana
1980: Tony Atlas
Runners-up: 1—Larry Zbyszko, 2—Ted DiBiase, 3—Kerry Von Erich
1979: Tommy Rich
Runners-up: 1—Eddy Mansfield, 2—Kevin Von Erich, 3—Ted DiBiase
1978: Dino Bravo
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund, 2—Rick Steamboat, 3—Tony Atlas

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR

2002: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Eddie Guerrero, 2—Chris Benoit, 3—Ron Killings
2001: Rob Van Dam
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin, 2—Booker T, 3—Scott Hall
2000: Rikishi
Runners-up: 1—Dusty Rhodes, 2—The Undertaker, 3—Bryan Clark
1999: Eddie Guerrero
Runners-up: 1—Buff Bagwell, 2—Curt Hennig, 3—Michael Hayes
1998: X-Pac
Runners-up: 1—Sting, 2—Dean Malenko, 3—The Warrior
1997: Bret Hart
Runners-up: 1—Curt Hennig, 2—Brian Pillman, 3—Ric Flair
1996: Sid Vicious
Runners-up: 1—Jake Roberts, 2—Faarooq, 3—Road Warrior Animal
1995: Randy Savage
Runners-up: 1—The Heavenly Bodies, 2—Savio Vega, 3—The Ultimate Warrior

X-Pac: 1998

1994: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund, 2—The Undertaker, 3—Alundra Blayze
1993: Lex Luger
Runners-up: 1—Brutus Beefcake, 2—Ric Flair, 3—Paul Roma
1992: The Ultimate Warrior
Runners-up: 1—Bob Backlund, 2—The Sheik, 3—Junkyard Dog

INSPIRATIONAL WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

2002: Eddie Guerrero
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Charlie Haas, 3—Chris Benoit
2001: Kurt Angle
Runners-up: 1—Chris Jericho, 2—Shane McMahon, 3—Spike Dudley
2000: Booker T
Runners-up: 1—Mick Foley, 2—Crash Holly, 3—Chyna
1999: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Bret Hart, 2—X-Pac, 3—Hacksaw Duggan
1998: Bill Goldberg
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin, 2—Mankind, 3—Shane Douglas
1997: Terry Funk
Runners-up: 1—Steve Austin, 2—Perry Saturn, 3—Roddy Piper
1996: Jake Roberts
Runners-up: 1—Jushin Liger, 2—Ahmed Johnson, 3—Rey Misterio Jr.
1995: Barry Horowitz
Runners-up: 1—Sabu, 2—Antonio Inoki, 3—Dan Severn
1994: Bret Hart
Runners-up: 1—Terry Funk, 2—The Guardian Angel, 3—Dave Sullivan
1993: Cactus Jack
Runners-up: 1—Lex Luger, 2—The Kid, 3—Brutus Beefcake
1992: Ron Simmons
Runners-up: 1—The Undertaker, 2—Rick Steamboat, 3—Eric Embry
1991: The Patriot
Runners-up: 1—Jerry Lawler, 2—Sid Justice, 3—Bill Dundee
1990: Sting
Runners-up: 1—Hulk Hogan, 2—Jerry Lawler, 3—Nikolai Volkoff
1989: Eric Embry
Runners-up: 1—Nikita Koloff, 2—Billy Jack Haynes, 3—Ric Flair
1988: Jerry Lawler
Runners-up: 1—Kerry Von Erich, 2—Road Warrior Animal, 3—Jake Roberts
1987: Nikita Koloff
Runners-up: 1—Dynamite Kid, 2—Chris Adams, 3—Superstar Graham
1986: Chris Adams
Runners-up: 1—Magnum T.A., 2—Kerry Von Erich, 3—Steve Williams
1985: Mike Von Erich
Runners-up: 1—Paul Orndorff, 2—Hacksaw Duggan, 3—Kevin Von Erich
1984: Sgt. Slaughter
Runners-up: 1—Kerry Von Erich, 2—Kevin Von Erich, 3—Bob Backlund
1983: Hulk Hogan
Runners-up: 1—Roddy Piper, 2—Buzz Sawyer, 3—Buddy Rose
1982: Roddy Piper
Runners-up: 1—Jimmy Snuka, 2—Mil Mascaras, 3—Jimmy Valiant
1981: Bob Backlund
Runners-up: 1—Ted DiBiase, 2—Tito Santana, 3—Mr. Wrestling II
1980: Junkyard Dog
Runners-up: 1—Rick Steamboat, 2—Verne Gagne, 3—Mr. Florida
1979: Chief Jay Strongbow
Runners-up: 1—Ric Flair, 2—Mr. Wrestling II, 3—Dusty Rhodes
1978: Blackjack Mulligan
Runners-up: 1—Bruno Sammartino, 2—Mr. Wrestling II, 3—Jim Brunzell
1977: Bob Backlund
Runners-up: 1—Don Muraco, 2—Bruno Sammartino, 3—Terry Funk
1976: Bruno Sammartino
Runners-up: 1—Wahoo McDaniel, 2—Bob Roop, 3—Bob Armstrong
1975: Mike McCord
1974: Dick Murdoch
1973: Johnny Valentine
1972: Lord Al Hays

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

2002: Maven
Runners-up: 1—Christopher Nowinski, 2—Nidia, 3—Taylor Matheny
2001: Randy Orton
Runners-up: 1—Brock Lesnar, 2—K-Kwik, 3—Prototype
2000: Kurt Angle
Runners-up: 1—Lita, 2—Mark Jindrak & Sean O'Haire, 3—Chuck Palumbo
1999: Shane McMahon
Runners-up: 1—Evan Karagias, 2—Vince McMahon, 3—Lash LeRoux
1998: Bill Goldberg
Runners-up: 1—Sable, 2—Darren Drozdov, 3—Mark Henry
1997: Prince Iaukea
Runners-up: 1—Ernest Miller, 2—Chris Chetti, 3—Brakus
1996: The Giant
Runners-up: 1—Steve McMichael, 2—Rocky Maivia, 3—Joe Gomez
1995: Alex Wright
Runners-up: 1—Sgt. Craig Pittman, 2—Lawrence Taylor, 3—Madd Maxxine
1994: 911
Runners-up: 1—Bob Holly, 2—Abbudah Singh, 3—Mikey Whipwreck
1993: Vampire Warrior
Runners-up: 1—Robbie Eagle, 2—Keith & Kent Cole, 3—The Headhunters

1992: Erik Watts
Runners-up: 1—Dallas Page, 2—Vladimir Koloff, 3—Chaz
1991: Johnny B. Badd
Runners-up: 1—The Patriot, 2—Terri Power, 3—Lightning Kid
1990: Steve Austin
Runners-up: 1—El Gigante, 2—Brad Anderson, 3—Chris Chavis
1989: Mike Enos & Wayne Bloom
Runners-up: 1—Dustin Rhodes, 2—Scotty the Body, 3—Johnathan Holliday
1988: Madusa Miceli
Runners-up: 1—Chris Benoit, 2—Max Pain, 3—Scott Steiner
1987: Owen Hart
Runners-up: 1—Bubba Rogers, 2—Shane Douglas, 3—Doug Furnas
1986: Lex Luger
Runners-up: 1—Bam Bam Bigelow, 2—Sting, 3—Tom Magee
1985: Nord the Barbarian
Runners-up: 1—Kendall Windham, 2—Dan Spivey, 3—Sam Houston
1984: Mike Von Erich
Runners-up: 1—Nikita Koloff, 2—Krusher Khrushchev, 3—Kevin Kelly
1983: Angelo Mosca Jr.
Runners-up: 1—King Kong Bundy, 2—Scott Armstrong, 3—Arn Anderson
1982: Brad Armstrong
Runners-up: 1—Tiger Mask, 2—Mike Rotundo, 3—Kamala
1981: David Sammartino
Runners-up: 1—Brad Rheingans, 2—Curt Hennig, 3—Ron Richie
1980: Terry Taylor
Runners-up: 1—Barry Windham, 2—Rick McGraw, 3—Tom Prichard
1979: Sweet Brown Sugar
Runners-up: 1—Steve Travis, 2—Bryan St. John, 3—Eddie Gilbert
1978: Tommy Rich
Runners-up: 1—Jay Youngblood, 2—David Von Erich, 3—Tully Blanchard
1977: Rick Steamboat
Runners-up: 1—Jimmy Snuka, 2—John Studd, 3—Skip Young
1976: Bob Backlund
Runners-up: 1—Chavo Guerrero, 2—Steve Keirn, 3—Johnny Rivera
1975: Ric Flair
1974: Larry Zbyszko
1973: Cowboy Bob Orton/Tony Garea (tie)
1972: Mike Graham

MANAGER OF THE YEAR

1999: Debra
Runners-up: 1—Jimmy Hart, 2—Bill Alfonso, 3—Paul Bearer
1998: Paul Bearer
Runners-up: 1—Bill Alfonso, 2—Tammy Lynn Sytch, 3—Paul Ellering
1997: Bill Alfonso
Runners-up: 1—Jacquelyn, 2—Paul Bearer, 3—Ted DiBiase
1996: Sunny
Runners-up: 1—Jimmy Hart, 2—Jim Cornette, 3—Bill Alfonso
1995: Jim Cornette
Runners-up: 1—Sherri Martel, 2—Col. Robert Parker, 3—Woman
1994: Jimmy Hart
Runners-up: 1—Ted DiBiase, 2—Col. Robert Parker, 3—Paul E. Dangerously
1993: Jim Cornette
Runners-up: 1—Harley Race, 2—Mr. Fuji, 3—Tammy Fytch
1992: Paul E. Dangerously
Runners-up: 1—Curt Hennig, 2—Harley Race, 3—Jim Cornette
1991: Bobby Heenan
Runners-up: 1—Harley Race, 2—Alexandra York, 3—Paul Bearer
1990: Teddy Long
Runners-up: 1—Bobby Heenan, 2—Ole Anderson, 3—Jim Cornette
1989: Bobby Heenan
Runners-up: 1—Gary Hart, 2—Teddy Long, 3—Gen. Skandor Akbar
1988: J.J. Dillon
Runners-up: 1—Elizabeth, 2—Jim Cornette, 3—Paul E. Dangerously
1987: Jimmy Hart
Runners-up: 1—J.J. Dillon, 2—Jim Cornette, 3—Paul E. Dangerously
1986: Capt. Lou Albano
Runners-up: 1—Paul Ellering, 2—Elizabeth, 3—Jim Cornette
1985: Jim Cornette
Runners-up: 1—Capt. Lou Albano, 2—Paul Ellering, 3—Bobby Heenan
1984: Paul Ellering
Runners-up: 1—Jimmy Hart, 2—Jim Cornette, 3—James J. Dillon
1983: James J. Dillon
Runners-up: 1—Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie, 2—Capt. Lou Albano, 3—Paul Ellering
1982: James J. Dillon
Runners-up: 1—Arnold Skoaland, 2—Sonny King, 3—Jimmy Hart
1981: Capt. Lou Albano
Runners-up: 1—Arnold Skoaland, 2—Sir Oliver Humperdink, 3—The Grand Wizard
1980: Sir Oliver Humperdink
Runners-up: 1—Arnold Skoaland, 2—Capt. Lou Albano, 3—The Great Mephisto
1979: Arnold Skoaland
Runners-up: 1—Capt. Lou Albano, 2—Buddy Rogers, 3—Sir Oliver Humperdink
1978: Arnold Skoaland
Runners-up: 1—The Grand Wizard, 2—Bobby Heenan, 3—Gary Hart
1977: The Grand Wizard
Runners-up: 1—Bobby Heenan, 2—Capt. Lou Albano, 3—Lord Al Hays
1976: Bobby Heenan
Runners-up: 1—Lou Albano, 2—Fred Blassie, 3—Gary Hart
1975: George "Crybaby" Cannon
1974: Capt. Lou Albano
1973: The Grand Wizard
1972: Bobby Heenan

WOMAN OF THE YEAR

2002: Trish Stratus
Runners-up: 1—Stephanie McMahon, 2—Stacy Keibler, 3—Torrie Wilson
2001: Lita
Runners-up: 1—Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley, 2—Stacy Keibler, 3—Torrie Wilson
2000: Stephanie McMahon-Helmsley
Runners-up: 1—Lita, 2—Chyna, 3—Major Gunns

STANLEY WESTON/ EDITORS' AWARD

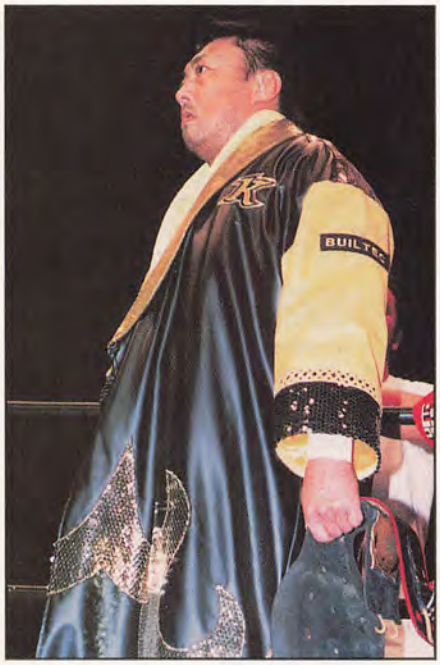
2002: Jim Ross
2001: Johnny Valentine
2000: Freddie Blassie
1999: Owen Hart
1998: Bobo Brazil
1997: Arn Anderson
1996: Dan Hodge
1995: Rick Steamboat
1994: Capt. Lou Albano
1993: Andre The Giant
1992: Stanley Weston
1991: Fabulous Moolah
1990: Buddy Rogers
1989: Gordon Solie
1988: Bruiser Brody & Adrian Adonis
1987: Paul Boesch
1986: Verne Gagne
1985: Dan Shocket
1984: David Von Erich
1983: The Grand Wizard
1982: Lou Thesz
1981: Bruno Sammartino

Gordon Solie: 1989

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

TITLE CHANGES: 2003

The following is a cumulative listing of all major title changes to have taken place in 2003 up to press time. For a comprehensive up-to-date title listing, be sure to check out the "Roll Call Of Champions" in each issue of *Inside Wrestling*.



Toshiaki Kawada

Jado

ALL-JAPAN TRIPLE CROWN

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Shinya Hashimoto	Keiji Muto	Tokyo, Japan	February 23
Toshiaki Kawada	Shinjiro Ohtani	Tokyo, Japan[1]	September 6

[1]This was the final match of a tournament held to fill a vacancy created when Hashimoto had to give up the championships due to injury.

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Keiji Muto & Arashi	Satoshi Kojima & Jimmy Yang	Yokohama, Japan[1]	June 8

[1]This was the final match of a tournament held to fill a vacancy created when Taiyo Kea, previously a co-holder of the title with Satoshi Kojima, injured his knee and could no longer defend the championship.

ALL-JAPAN JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE

Kendo Ka Shin has held this title since April 13, 2002.

IWGP HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Yoshihiro Takayama	Yuji Nagata	Tokyo, Japan	May 2
Yoshihiro Takayama	Masa Chono	Osaka, Japan[1]	August 28
Hiroyoshi Tenzan	Yoshihiro Takayama	Yokohama, Japan	November 3
Shinsuke Nakamura	Hiroyoshi Tenzan	Osaka, Japan	December 9

[1]This was a match for the vacant title, as Takayama gave up the championship shortly after his title July 21 title defense against Chono ended in a double-knockout.

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Hiroshi Tanahashi & Yutaka Yoshie	Masa Chono & Hiroyoshi Tenzan	Tokyo, Japan	June 13
Osamu Nishimura & Hiroyoshi Tenzan	Hiroshi Tanahashi & Yutaka Yoshie	Nagoya, Japan	December 14

IWGP JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Tiger Mask IV	Koji Kanemoto	Hiroshima, Japan	April 23
Jado	—	Tokyo, Japan[1]	October 13
Heat	Jado	Nagoya, Japan	December 14

[1]Jade captured the title, which Tiger Mask IV vacated in September, by winning an 11-man Royal Rumble-style battle royal.

NWA HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
A.J. Styles	Jeff Jarrett	Nashville, TN[1]	June 11
Jeff Jarrett	A.J. Styles	Nashville, TN	October 22

[1]This was a three-way match also involving Raven.

Jeff Jarrett

NWA TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Chris Harris & James Storm	Brian Lee & Slash	Nashville, TN	January 8
Low-Ki & Elix Skipper	Chris Harris & James Storm	Nashville, TN	January 22
Christopher Daniels & Low-Ki	Chris Harris & James Storm	Nashville, TN[1]	March 12
Jerry Lynn & Red	Christopher Daniels & Elix Skipper	Nashville, TN[2]	April 16
Christopher Daniels	Jerry Lynn & Red	Nashville, TN[3]	May 7
Chris Harris & James Storm	Christopher Daniels & Elix Skipper	Nashville, TN	June 25
Simon Diamond & Johnny Swinger	Chris Harris & James Storm	Nashville, TN	August 27
B.G. James & Ron Killings	Simon Diamond & Johnny Swinger	Nashville, TN[4]	November 26

[1]The title was held up after a controversial February 5 match between Low-Ki & Elix Skipper and Brian Lee & Slash. This was a match to determine new champs.
[2]Daniels, Skipper, & Low-Ki were allowed to defend the title in any combination of two.
[3]Daniels won the title in a handicap match and chose Elix Skipper to be the co-holder of the title one week later.
[4]The title was held up after a controversial match between the two teams on November 19. This rematch was actually a six-man, with Konnan joining James & Killings' team, and Glenn Gilberti joining Diamond & Swinger. After James, Killings, & Konnan won, James & Killings were designated as the champions.

NWA-TNA X TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Kid Kash	Sonny Siaki	Nashville, TN	February 12
Red	Kid Kash	Nashville, TN	April 30
Chris Sabin	Red	Nashville, TN[1]	May 14
Michael Shane	—	Nashville, TN[2]	August 20

[1]This was a three-way match also involving Jerry Lynn.
[2]This was a three-way "Ultimate X" match, also involving Chris Sabin and Frankie Kazarian, for the vacant title. The championship was held up two weeks earlier after a controversial match between champion Sabin and Kazarian.

Michael Shane

TITLE CHANGES: 2003

Nova and Aaron Stevens

Kenta Kobashi

OHIO VALLEY WRESTLING
HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Nick Dinsmore	Damaja	Louisville, KY[1]	February 19
Doug Basham	Nick Dinsmore	Louisville, KY	April 9
Damaja	Doug Basham	Louisville, KY	July 31
Rob Conway	Damaja	Louisville, KY	August 13
Johnny Jeter	Rob Conway	Louisville, KY	August 13
Mark Magnus	Johnny Jeter	Louisville, KY	October 15

[1]This was a three-way match also involving Doug Basham.

OHIO VALLEY WRESTLING
SOUTHERN TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Bane & Seven	Lance Cade & Rene Dupree	Louisville, KY[1]	March 5
Bradshaw & Ron Simmons	Bane & Seven[2]	—	—
Chris Cage & Tank Toland	Garrison Cade & Mark Jindrak	Louisville, KY[3]	June 27
Nova & Aaron Stevens	Chris Cage & Tank Toland	Louisville, KY	October 10

[1]This was the final match of a tournament held to fill a vacancy created when previous champions Shelton Benjamin & Redd Dogg (Rodney Mack) split up and relinquished the title.

[2]As the top contenders to the title, Bradshaw & Simmons were awarded the title when a fractured pelvis left Bane unable to compete. Their first defense took place on April 11.

[3]This was the final match of a tournament held to fill a vacancy created when previous champions Bradshaw & Ron Simmons vacated the title due to Bradshaw's hernia.

PRO WRESTLING NOAH
GLOBAL HONORED CROWN TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Kenta Kobashi	Mitsuharu Misawa	Tokyo, Japan	March 1

PRO WRESTLING NOAH
GLOBAL HONORED CROWN TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Tamon Honda & Kenta Kobashi	Jun Akiyama & Akitoshi Saito	Tokyo, Japan	June 6
Hiroshi Tanahashi & Yuji Nagata	Tamon Honda & Kenta Kobashi	Sapporo, Japan	November 30

PRO WRESTLING NOAH GLOBAL HONORED CROWN JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Michael Modest	Yoshinobu Kanemaru	Fukuoka, Japan	March 30
Takashi Sugiura	Michael Modest	Tokyo, Japan	September 12

Samoa Joe

RING OF HONOR TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Samoa Joe	Xavier	Philadelphia, PA	March 22

RING OF HONOR TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
A.J. Styles & Red	Christopher Daniels & Xavier	Cambridge, MA[1]	March 15
Trent Acid & Johnny Kashmere	Dixie & Izzy	Philadelphia, PA[2]	September 20
Dixie & Izzy	Trent Acid & Johnny Kashmere	Glen Burnie, MD	October 16
Jay & Mark Briscoe	Dixie & Izzy	Elizabeth, NJ	November 1

[1]Xavier was allowed to defend the title on behalf of Donovan Morgan.
[2]This was the final match of a gauntlet series to fill a vacancy created when Styles & Red had to give up the title due to Red's knee injury.

Brock Lesnar

WWE RAW TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Bill Goldberg	Triple-H	Hershey, PA	September 21
Triple-H	Bill Goldberg	Orlando, FL[1]	December 14

[1]This was a three-way match also involving Kane.

WWE SMACKDOWN TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Brock Lesnar	Kurt Angle	Seattle, WA	March 30
Kurt Angle	Brock Lesnar	Denver, CO[1]	July 27
Brock Lesnar	Kurt Angle	Raleigh, NC[2]	September 16

[1]This was a three-way match also involving The Big Show.
[2]This was a 60-minute "Ironman" match; Lesnar won by recording five falls to Angle's four.

TITLE CHANGES: 2003

Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley

Bashams

WWE RAW TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
William Regal & Lance Storm	Booker T & Goldust	Phoenix, AZ	January 6
Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley	William Regal & Lance Storm	Boston, MA	January 19
William Regal & Lance Storm	Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley	Providence, RI	January 20
Chief Morley & Lance Storm	—	Sacramento, CA[1]	March 24
Rob Van Dam & Kane	Chief Morley & Lance Storm	Seattle, WA[2]	March 31
Rene Dupree & Sylvan Grenier	Rob Van Dam & Kane	Houston, TX	June 15
Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley	Rene Dupree & Sylvan Grenier	Hershey, PA[3]	September 21
Batista & Ric Flair	Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley	Orlando, FL[4]	December 14

[1]William Regal & Lance Storm were stripped of the title because Regal could not defend it due to illness. Chief Morley (Val Venis) was given the authority to name new champions by Raw GM Eric Bischoff, so he awarded the title to himself & Storm.

[2]This was a three-way match also involving Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley.

[3]This was a two-on-three handicap table match, as Dupree & Grenier were joined by Rob Conway, but a prematch stipulation allowed the title to change hands if the Dudleys won.

[4]This was the last match of a seven-team gauntlet series. It was supposed to be a six-team match, but Raw co-GM Eric Bischoff added Batista & Flair at the end.

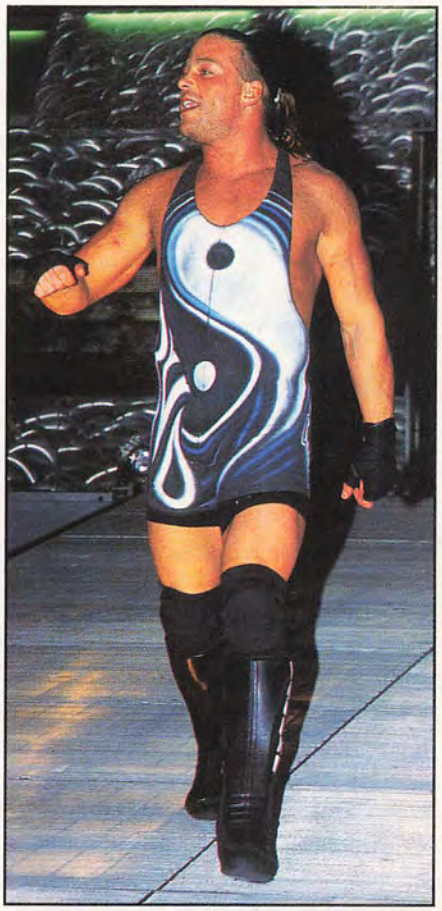
WWE SMACKDOWN TAG TEAM TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Shelton Benjamin & Charlie Haas	Eddie & Chavo Guerrero Jr.	Philadelphia, PA	February 4
Eddie Guerrero & Tajiri	Shelton Benjamin & Charlie Haas	Charlotte, NC	
Shelton Benjamin & Charlie Haas	Eddie Guerrero & Tajiri	Rochester, NY	July 1
Eddie & Chavo Guerrero Jr.	Shelton Benjamin & Charlie Haas	Raleigh, NC	September 16
The Basham Brothers	Eddie & Chavo Guerrero Jr.	Albany, NY	October 21

WWE INTERCONTINENTAL TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Christian	—	Charlotte, NC[1]	May 18
Booker T	Christian	Montreal, Quebec	July 7
Christian	Booker T	Des Moines, IA	August 10
Rob Van Dam	Christian	Chicago, IL	September 29
Chris Jericho	Rob Van Dam	Fayetteville, NC	October 27
Rob Van Dam	Chris Jericho	Fayetteville, NC	October 27[2]
Randy Orton	Rob Van Dam	Orlando, FL	December 14

[1]This title was reactivated by Raw co-GM Steve Austin. Christian won a battle royal to capture the vacant championship.
[2]Raw GM Steve Austin ordered an immediate rematch.



Rob Van Dam

WWE U.S. TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Eddie Guerrero	Chris Benoit	Denver, CO[1]	July 27
The Big Show	Eddie Guerrero	Baltimore, MD	October 19

[1]This was the final match of a tournament held to determine a champion after WWE made the decision to reactivate the old WCW U.S. title.

WWE CRUISERWEIGHT TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Matt Hardy	Billy Kidman	Montreal, Quebec	February 23
Rey Misterio Jr.	Matt Hardy	Anaheim, CA	June 3
Tajiri	Rey Misterio Jr.	Philadelphia, PA	September 23

Tajiri

WWE WOMEN'S TITLE

WON BY	WON FROM	LOCATION	DATE
Trish Stratus	Victoria	Seattle, WA[1]	March 30
Jazz	Trish Stratus	Worcester, MA	April 27
Gail Kim	Jazz	Buffalo, NY[2]	June 30
Molly Holly	Gail Kim	Colorado Springs, CO	July 28

[1]This was a three-way match also involving Jazz.

PWI ACHIEVEMENT 2003

MEMORIES OF 2003: THE EDITORS' PICKS

Finally, we close out this year-end issue of *PWI* by asking our editors and writers to pick the most enduring moment of the past year. In doing so, we close the book on 2003 and look ahead to the next 12 months!

STU SAKS (Publisher): "Zach Gowen is not the most liked wrestler in the WWE locker room. There are those who think he is the beneficiary of preferential treatment and has an attitude problem. Well, tough! Life has thrown tragedy in this kid's path for most of his life. In 2003, he actually benefited from his handicap. Maybe he did get a little full of himself, but how many times in his life has he had the opportunity to puff out his chest a little? Zach has faced enough hardship in his life; he shouldn't have to put up with a bunch of wrestlers who are jealous of his 15 minutes of fame."

DAVE LENKER (Editor-in-Chief): "Brock Lesnar's shooting star press wasn't exactly a closely guarded secret. We knew he'd executed it many times during his stay in OVW, and something told me he'd dust it off for a special occasion in WWE. The main event of WrestleMania qualifies as special. As he climbed to the top rope at the end of an exhausting match with Kurt Angle, I knew it was coming. And I remember cringing, sliding off the edge of my easy chair, and rolling onto the floor as he came up short, landing mostly on his head. Definitely the scariest 'Mania moment I've ever seen. Thank God it wasn't tragic."

BRANDI MAKIEWICZ (Managing Editor): "With his ability, size, and name, Teddy Hart should be the hottest prospect in wrestling. Unfortunately, he has a lot of heat—but not in a good way. He brings to mind the old adage, 'You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink.' In his case, it's, 'You can lead a Hart to the ring, but you can't make it think.' It's one thing to screw up and piss off a locker room, but it's another to blame everyone from A.J. Styles to C.M. Punk for it. Teddy could have been the best of the Harts, Version 3.0. Instead, he's their worst nightmare since Aunt Diana. It's in his honor that I print the accompanying photo of C.M. Punk—wearing one of Teddy's jackets at that ill-fated Ring of Honor show in November."

DAN MURPHY (Senior Writer): "My enduring memory of 2003 is the Royal Rumble match between Chris Benoit and Kurt Angle. Benoit never seems to get the respect he deserves. It was fantastic to see him get a chance to go move-for-move against Angle on a major pay-per-view. They way both men kept countering each other was more thrilling than any high-flying X division spotfest. Every move meant something, as both Angle and Benoit were out to win respect—from fans and each other. It was reminiscent of Magnum T.A. against Tully Blanchard or Bret Hart against Curt Hennig. As far as I'm concerned, the Match of the Year took place less than a month into 2003."

WILL WELSH (Senior Writer): "It occurred way back in January on a WWE TV show that's no longer on the air, but watching Hardcore Holly shoot on eventual *Tough Enough* champion Matt Cappotelli during a training match was disturbing. Having spent five years in the Marine Corps, one of the most testosterone-influenced outfits in the world, I know about initiation rights. (Ask me about the painful ordeal of getting my corporal stripes pinned on me one day.) However, what Holly did wasn't an initiation. It was an assault. Cappotelli did nothing wrong to deserve the beating except step in the ring with a salty veteran with a huge chip on his huge shoulder."

HARRY BURKETT (Senior Writer): "Roddy Piper returning to host 'Piper's Pit' on the April 10 broadcast of *Smackdown* brought back so many memories of my childhood, and reminded me of how much I enjoyed 'Hot Rod' when I was a kid. Yes, he was criticized for his weight gain and immobility in the ring, and some even questioned his mental stability, but we shouldn't be too judgmental about what time has done to the man. Considering all the years that Piper spent raising hell, I still think he wears it fairly well."

FRANK KREWDA (Senior Writer): "My strongest memory of 2003 was Goldberg winning the Raw title. What made it stand out was actually everything that led up to it. Yes, he got the Raw gold, but considering all the unflattering occurrences that befell him prior to that night, it would appear some major forces resented him. Was it Jim Ross, who admitted WWE 'overthought' Goldberg's character? Unlikely. Maybe Linda McMahon, who complained that Goldberg had been a disappointment? Or Triple-H, who warned that Goldberg wouldn't stomp through WWE like he did WCW? WWE cut 'Da Man' off at da knees for a long time—and I hope it doesn't repeat those mistakes with anyone else."

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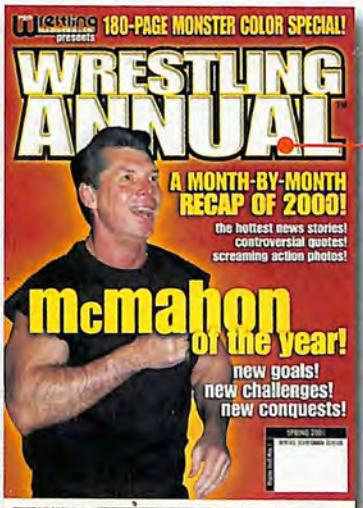

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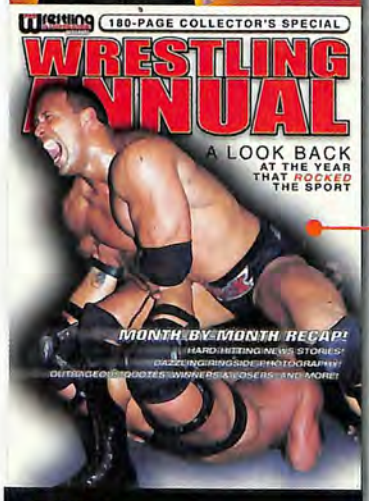

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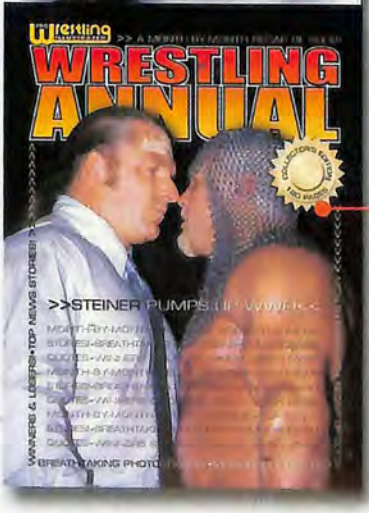

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